

Old Sleuth Library

BONANZA BARDIE; Or, THE TREASURE OF THE ROCKIES.
By OLD SLEUTH.

A SERIES OF THE MOST THRILLING DETECTIVE STORIES EVER PUBLISHED.

No. 42

{ SINGLE
NUMBER. }

GEORGE MUNRO, PUBLISHER,
Nos. 17 to 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

{ PRICE
5 CENTS. }

Vol. III.

Old Sleuth Library, Issued Quarterly.—By Subscription, 25 cents per Annum.
Copyrighted 1888, by George Munro.—Entered at the Post Office at New York at Second Class Rates.—November 1, 1888.
Copyrighted 1888, by George Munro.

BONANZA BARDIE; OR THE TREASURE OF THE ROCKIES. BY OLD SLEUTH.



NEW YORK: GEORGE MUNRO, PUBLISHER,
17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET.

OLD SLEUTH LIBRARY.

REDUCED TO 5 CENTS EACH.

ISSUED QUARTERLY.

A Series of the Most Thrilling Detective Stories Ever Published!

ALL BOOKS IN THIS SERIES ARE COMPLETE IN ONE PART.

NO.	PRICE.	NO.	PRICE.	NO.	PRICE.
1 Old Sleuth, the Detective.....	5c	24 The Mysteries and Miseries of New York.....	5c	44 The King of the Shadowers.....	5c
2 The King of the Detectives.....	5c	25 Old Terrible.....	5c	45 Gasparoni, the Italian Detective; or, Hide-and-Seek in New York.....	5c
3 Old Sleuth's Triumph.....	5c	26 The Smugglers of New York Bay.....	5c	46 Old Sleuth's Luck.....	5c
4 Under a Million Disguises.....	5c	27 Manfred, the Magic Trick Detective.....	5c	47 The Irish Detective.....	5c
5 Night Scenes in New York.....	5c	28 Mura, the Western Lady Detective.....	5c	48 Down in a Coal Mine.....	5c
6 Old Electricity, the Lightning Detective.....	5c	29 Mons. Armand; or, The French Detective in New York.....	5c	49 Faithful Mike, the Irish Hero.....	5c
7 The Shadow Detective.....	5c	30 Lady Kate, the Dashing Female Detective.....	5c	50 Silver Tom the Detective; or, Link by Link.....	5c
8 Red-Light Will, the River Detective.....	5c	31 Hamud the Detective.....	5c	51 The Duke of New York.....	5c
9 Iron Burgess, the Government Detective.....	5c	32 The Giant Detective in France.....	5c	52 Jack Gameway; or, A Western Boy in New York.....	5c
10 The Brigands of New York.....	5c	33 The American Detective in Russia.....	5c	53 All Round New York.....	5c
11 Tracked by a Ventriloquist.....	5c	34 The Dutch Detective.....	5c	54 Old Ironsides in New York.....	5c
12 The Twin Shadowers.....	5c	35 Old Puritan, the Old-Time Yankee Detective.....	5c	55 Jack Ripple and His Talking Dog.....	5c
13 The French Detective.....	5c	36 Manfred's Quest; or, The Mystery of a Trunk.....	5c	56 Billy Joyce, the Government Detective.....	5c
14 Billy Wayne, the St. Louis Detective.....	5c	37 Tom Thumb; or, The Wonderful Boy Detective.....	5c	57 Badger and His Shadow.....	5c
15 The New York Detective.....	5c	38 Old Ironsides Abroad.....	5c	58 Darral the Detective.....	5c
16 O'Neil McDarragh, the Detective.....	5c	39 Little Black Tom; or, The Adventures of a Mischievous Ducky.....	5c	59 Old Sleuth, Badger & Co.....	5c
17 Old Sleuth in Harness Again.....	5c	40 Old Ironsides Among the Cowboys.....	5c	60 Old Phenomenal.....	5c
18 The Lady Detective.....	5c	41 Black Tom in Search of a Father; or, the Further Adventures of a Mischievous Ducky.....	5c	61 A Golden Curse.....	5c
19 The Yankee Detective.....	5c	42 Bonanza Barbie; or, the Treasure of the Rockies.....	5c	62 The Mysterious Murder.....	5c
20 The Fastest Boy in New York.....	5c	43 Old Transform, the Secret Special Detective.....	5c		
21 Black Raven, the Georgia Detective.....	5c				
22 Night-hawk, the Mounted Detective.....	5c				
23 The Gypsy Detective.....	5c				

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers at 5 cents each, or will be sent to any address, postage paid, on receipt of 6 cents per copy, or five for 25 cents, by the publishers. Address

GEORGE MUNRO'S SONS, Munro's Publishing House,

P. O. Box 3751.

17 to 27 Vandewater Street, New York.

LIBRARY OF AMERICAN AUTHORS.

ISSUED QUARTERLY. PRICE 25 CENTS EACH.

The following books are now ready:

1 MY OWN SIN. By Mrs. Mary E. Bryan, Author of "Manch," etc. Price 25 cents.	18 LAUREL VANE; OR, THE GIRLS' CONSPIRACY. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.	37 LADY GAY'S PRIDE; OR, THE MISER'S TREASURE. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
2 THE ROCK OR THE RYE. (After "The Quick or the Dead.") By T. C. DeLeon. Price 25 cents.	19 MARRIED FOR MONEY. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	38 LILLIAN'S VOW; OR, THE MYSTERY OF RALEIGH HOUSE. By Mrs. E. Burke Collins. Price 25 cents.
3 SHADOW AND SUNSHINE. By Adna H. Lightner. Price 25 cents.	20 MURIEL; OR, BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE FOR HER. By Christine Carlton. Price 25 cents.	39 LOTTIE AND VICTORINE; OR, WORKING THEIR OWN WAY. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.
4 DAISY BROOKS. By Laura Jean Libbey, Author of "Miss Middleton's Lover." Price 25 cents.	21 SWORN TO SILENCE; OR, ALINE RODNEY'S SECRET. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.	40 THE BANKER'S DAUGHTER. Adapted from the play by Bronson Howard. By Magdalen Barrett. Price 25 cents.
5 THE HEIRESS OF CAMERON HALL. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	22 THE BRIDE OF MONTE-CRISTO. A Sequel to "The Count of Monte-Cristo." Price 25 cents.	41 THE BARONET'S BRIDE. By May Agnes Fleming. Price 25 cents.
6 MARRIAGE. By Margaret Lee, Author of "Divorce," etc. Price 25 cents.	23 LOVE AND JEALOUSY. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	42 LANCASTER'S CHOICE. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
7 LIZZIE ADRIANCE. By Margaret Lee, Author of "Marriage," etc. Price 25 cents.	24 HAZEL KIRKE. By Marie Walsh. Price 25 cents.	43 TIGER LILY; OR, THE WOMAN WHO CAME BETWEEN. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
8 MADOLIN RIVERS. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	25 THE BELLE OF SARATOGA. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	44 THE PEARL AND THE RUBY. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
9 SAINTS AND SINNERS; OR, THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER. By Marie Walsh, Author of "Hazel Kirke," "The World," etc. Price 25 cents.	26 MANCH. By Mrs. Mary E. Bryan. Price 25 cents.	45 BEAUTIFUL IONE'S LOVER. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.
10 LEONIE LOCKE; OR, THE ROMANCE OF A BEAUTIFUL NEW YORK WORKING-GIRL. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	27 HER SECOND CHOICE. By Charlotte M. Stanley. Price 25 cents.	46 ERIC BRADON'S LOVE. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
11 JUNIE'S LOVE-TEST. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	28 EVE, THE FACTORY GIRL. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	47 FROU-FROU. From the French of MM. Meilhac and Halévy. By Charlotte M. Stanley. Price 25 cents.
12 IDA CHALONER'S HEART. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	29 HIS COUNTRY COUSIN. By Charlotte M. Stanley. Price 25 cents.	48 THE UNSEEN BRIDEGROOM; OR, WEDDED FOR A WEEK. By May Agnes Fleming. Price 25 cents.
13 UNCLE NED'S WHITE CHILD. By Mrs. Mary E. Bryan. Price 25 cents.	30 RUTH THE OUTCAST. By Mary E. Bryan. Price 25 cents.	49 LITTLE SWEETHEART. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
14 ALL FOR LOVE OF A FAIR FACE; OR, A BROKEN BETROTHAL. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	31 SOLD FOR GOLD. By Mrs. E. Burke Collins. Price 25 cents.	50 FLOWER AND JEWEL. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
15 A STRUGGLE FOR A HEART; OR, CRYSTABEL'S FATAL LOVE. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	32 A MISPLACED LOVE; OR, THE RECTOR'S DAUGHTER. By Charlotte M. Stanley. Price 25 cents.	51 LITTLE NOBODY. By Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller. Price 25 cents.
16 LITTLE ROSEBUD'S LOVERS; OR, A CRUEL REVENGE. By Laura Jean Libbey. Price 25 cents.	33 LOVE AT SARATOGA. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	
17 VENDETTA; OR, THE SOUTHERN HEIRESS. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	34 ESTELLA'S HUSBAND; OR, THRICE LOST, THRICE WON. By May Agnes Fleming. Price 25 cents.	
	35 THE LITTLE LIGHT-HOUSE LASS; OR, THE WORLD WELL LOST. By Elizabeth Stiles. Price 25 cents.	
	36 WILD AND WILLFUL; OR, TO THE BITTER END. By Lucy Randall Comfort. Price 25 cents.	

TO BE ISSUED OCTOBER 7, 1893:

52 THE DEPTH OF LOVE; OR, A MOTHER'S SACRIFICE. Price 25 cents.

Others will follow at short intervals.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of the price, by the publishers.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO'S SONS, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

P. O. Box 3751.

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

Old Sleuth Library

BONANZA BARDIE; Or, THE TREASURE OF THE ROCKIES.
By OLD SLEUTH.

A SERIES OF THE MOST THRILLING DETECTIVE STORIES EVER PUBLISHED.

No. 42

{ SINGLE
NUMBER. }

GEORGE MUNRO, PUBLISHER,
Nos. 17 to 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

{ PRICE
5 CENTS. }

Vol. III.

Old Sleuth Library, Issued Quarterly.—By Subscription, 25 cents per Annum.
Copyrighted 1888, by George Munro.—Entered at the Post Office at New York at Second Class Rates.—November 1, 1888.
Copyrighted 1888, by George Munro.

BONANZA BARDIE; OR, THE TREASURE OF THE ROCKIES.

BY OLD SLEUTH.

CHAPTER I.

"HALT!"

A dark figure had just issued from a tunnel, through which the great Prince of Wales Road passes in Ireland, when four other dark figures suddenly leaped forward, and the one word "Halt!" sounded upon the night air.

It was a startling tableau that was presented at that moment under the moonlight in that white road, with the mouth of the tunnel as a dark background, and the distant hills, lying still further back, in their rugged austerity.

The figure that emerged from the tunnel was that of a stalwart young man, and it was evident from his motions as he stepped out under the broad moonlight that he was anticipating pursuit, as he moved cautiously, and ever and anon cast furtive glances backward, as though expecting some foe to spring upon him; but instead his enemies confronted him in the persons of four of the rural constabulary, and as the command to halt was uttered two rifles were aimed at the young man's breast, and their glittering barrels gleamed under the rays of the moon.

The young man was cool as a cucumber, as the saying goes, under the thrilling circumstances. He did not recoil or utter an outcry of alarm, but a close observer would have noticed a steady, clear gleam in his eyes, as in a firm voice he said, speaking with a rich and mellifluous brogue:

"Lower yer guns. Would yees shoot a man down in cowlid blood?"

"We know ye, Bardie O'Connor, and ye'll down on yer knees and up wid yer hands, or, man, we'll shoot."

"Ye call me Bardie O'Connor?"

"We do, and we know ye well, although you're gotten up in the garb of the boatman down at Bayside."

"Faith, if yees hev that idea in yer heads it's no use for me to stand here arguing wid yees so yees can lower yer guns."

"Will ye surrender?"

"Well, don't yees see I will? What else would I do when yees hev that crowd behind yees there?"

As the young man spoke he raised his hands, and suddenly leaning forward, pointed as though there were others behind the constables. The latter turned, and that momentary inattention proved fatal to their purpose, for quick as a flash the man whom they had commanded to halt drew a long stick which he had evidently held concealed at his side, and with the quickness of a practiced swordsman he got to work. He leaped forward between the barrels of the two rifles, and ere the assailed knew what was to occur, both men received a welt upon the head that stretched them senseless upon the road, and the other two were tapped as quickly, ere they had time to raise their rifles, even to use them as clubs.

The assailant proved himself to be not only a man of extraordinary strength, but also one possessed of remarkable quickness and agility, as within five seconds from the period when he struck his first foe, he had all four lying helpless in the dust, and leaping over their prostrate bodies he started along the road at a running pace so swift as to defy pursuit.

The fugitive ran for about a mile, when he came to where the road made a turn around a rocky bluff. Here he came to a halt, and after waiting a moment he put his fingers to his lips and there issued forth a shrill whistle, and the next instant there came an answering whistle, and still a moment later there stood before him a grotesque-looking figure.

"Teddy, is that you?"

"Begorra, Bardie, but it's no one else."

"And hev ye the jaunting-car at hand?"

"I hev."

"Where?"

"A small bit of a piece down the road."

"Well, it's at once we'll flit, me lad; for it's not ten minutes ago I had a tussle wid the constables."

"And did they overtake ye, Bardie, dear?"

"No; but they waylaid me, and they had their guns ranged on me, ready to blow off the top of me head, when I parleyed wid them a moment, and then I flung the stick ag'in their guns, and when they lay down to let me pass I just lept over them, and here I am."

"It's a wonder ye are, Bardie."

"We've no time for compliments, Teddy. Shure they'll be up and after me, or passin' the word along the line that Bardie O'Connor is fitting this way."

The two men hurried along down the road, and soon came to where a jaunting-car was halted beside a hedge. In a trice the horse was unhitched, the two men ascended to the seat and away the animal was put to his speed along the road, and so through the night the horse was driven at a good gait, until just before dawn he was brought to a halt, and the passenger, Bardie O'Connor, shook hands with the driver, and said:

"It's good-mornin' and it's good-bye, Teddy."

"And will ye take the train, Bardie?"

"No; it's by car I'll go to Queenstown."

"And will ye travel in the daylight?"

"That will be as circumstances direct, my lad. We can never tell what it before is at such times, but ye can moind this, I'll not be taken alive, and I've got in me head better than a dream to fix it there, that I'll be off safe and sound from me enemies ere Sunday night comin'."

"And we'll hear from ye when ye arrive in America?"

"Ye will hear from me through some of our friends, Teddy, dear; and now it's once again good-mornin' and good-bye."

"But, man, dear, ye are givin' yerself away."

"Never fear, Teddy, ye can trust me. I'll be layin' low until night, and then I've a meetin' wid some one of our friends, and after that it's good-bye to old Ireland;" and in a low, but full rich voice, the fugitive sung:

"It may be for years and it may be forever—"

He stopped singing suddenly, for steps were heard, and without another word he darted into the bush beside the road and disappeared.

The driver of the jaunting-car heaved a sigh and urged his horse forward at a walk, when a pair of constables suddenly confronted him.

"Halt!" came the command.

"Let go the horse," called Teddy.

The men had halted the horse, and they stepped beside the driver's seat and fixed their eyes on the owner of the cart, demanding:

"Where did you come?"

"Where did I come from, are ye askin'?"

"Yes; where did you come?"

"Well, it's no secret; shure I came from Kenmare."

"And who were you talking to a moment ago?"

"Who was I talkin' to, are ye askin' me?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's no secret. Shure I was talkin' to Teddy Farrel."

"And who is Teddy?"

"I'm Teddy Farrel, at your service, me gay boys in yer fine clothes."

CHAPTER II.

THE constables put Teddy Farrel under a cross-fire of questions, but they learned nothing from him, and in good time the man drove on to Killarney, where he rested his horse and remained until late in the afternoon, when he started on his return to Bantry.

On the night following the incidents previously recorded, a man leaped the hedge surrounding the Herbert Mansion, and made his way past Muckross Abbey ruin to the shores of the lake, where he found a boat which he entered, and rowed himself over to the famous ruins of Innisfallen. As soon as he had reached the ruin, and passed beneath the ivy-buried arch that still remained of the long crumbling walls, he beheld a strange and weird sight. There were a dozen weird-looking figures gathered in the ruin; a solitary torch illumined the scene, but cast sufficient light to reveal the fact that the figures were clad in masks and long, black gowns, and were it not for the silence preserved an on-looker would have declared the *tout ensemble* as grotesque.

The man who had crossed in the boat, and who joined the strange group, was not disguised at all, and as the evening was warm he carried his coat upon his arm. As he stepped in the midst of the group of masked men, he said:

"Good-evening, my good friends!"

And it was noticeable that there was a total absence of the brogue in his speech; his pronunciation being clear and fine, as is characteristic of an educated Irish gentleman.

"A foine greeting to ye, Bardie," replied one of the men, and they all gathered around him, and there followed hearty hand-shakings and many kind and encouraging words; and after the greetings one of the men stepped forward and said:

"Bardie, we've put together a small sum here in this purse, and we're asking you to accept it from your friends."

There was deep emotion in the tones of Bardie O'Connor's voice, as he said:

"I am very thankful to you, my good friends, for this offer of your good will and kindness; but I am more thankful that I'm not in need of it, as I have a fair supply of money to do me until I reach old America; and as I've succeeded in escaping the police we have good reason for making merry instead of looking as solemn as I know yees all do under your masks. It's indeed a dark day and poor times for Ireland, when a man's friends must come hooded and gowned at midnight to bid him a God-speed; but I tell you brighter days are coming, and I'll take this occasion to say a few words for myself. I am the true heir of the Bardell estates and all the factory interests thereunto, and the present holder of the same is no kin to me, nor has he the remotest right to a foot of the land or any of the buildings thereon; but he is in possession, and because he has wronged me and robbed me of my rights he has become my bitterest foe, and it is he who trumped up the charges against me. It was he who has made it appear that blood is on my hands, and it is he who has caused me to be hounded all over Ireland and who has compelled me at length to flee from my native land with a stain upon my name and not a penny, comparatively speaking, in my pocket. But, boys, it is his day now;

mine will come, and, if I live, some day I'll come into possession of my own with my name cleared and my honor fully established, and I will some day return to be a friend to my friends and also a good friend of old Ireland, my native land, which I so dearly love, and no new scenes will ever tear from my heart a recollection of either my friends or the land of my birth; and again, good friends, you need not feel sad on my account. Sure, I'm glad to go abroad for a season, and if there is any land on earth wherein I'd choose to make a temporary home that land is America, and now, to show yees I'm not sad at heart, but full of hope and bright anticipations, I'll sing yees one song, as when we were won't to hold our meetings for the fun and enjoyment we could coin out of them."

Bardie O'Connor did sing a brave, merry song in restrained tones, but his voice was sweet and clear, and when he had concluded one of the masked men said:

"Bardie, tell us one more story afore ye go from us?"

"I will," said Bardie, in a merry tone, and he asked: "Do yees all remember old Loughlan that lived back from Bantry Well? I well remember the time he died, but it is only the other day I heard the following story told by one who was present when he drew his last breath. Sure, men, the last moment he said to those around his bed:

"'I've no fortune to lave yees, boys; all I hev is a few shillings, an' it would be of little lasting benefit to any one of yees, so I'll bequeath it to be spent in whisky at the toime of me funeral.'"

"Well, there came a moment's silence, when one of the friends, with the tears streaming down from his eyes, leaned over the dying man and asked:

"'Is it going to the cemetery or coming home that we shall drink the whisky?' Well, boys, old Loughlan meditated a moment, and then in a merry tone for a dying man said:

"'Yeess, had better drink the whisky going to the cemetery, boys, for I won't be wid yees coming back.'"

Bardie O'Connor was known as a good singer, a merry man, and a famous story teller, and his anecdote was received with a roar of laughter from his friends.

An hour passed, and at length Bardie O'Connor said:

"Well, my friends, it's time for me to be going."

There followed the hand-shaking once more, and the exchange of many kind and hopeful words, and the prospective immigrant at length, accompanied by one of the party, returned to his boat, and the two entered; and when in the middle of the lake, our hero's companion threw off his mask and gown, and stood revealed as attired like an old woman. Wig and all were to aid in the disguise.

"Well, well, Mike! what does this mean?" exclaimed Bardie, in surprise.

"Yer goin' to Cork?"

"I am."

"And from there to Queenstown?"

"I am."

"And the constables are on yer track?"

"I've good reason to know that."

"And that's why ye see me as I am, shure! I'm goin' wid ye; and it's me own plan I hev to carry ye safe to yer journey's end. And shure I'm yer ould woman now and yet my good man, and it's a foine foolin' we'll give the officers should any of them fall upon us by the way."

"Shure, Mike, your idea is a good one, but I can improve upon it."

"Ye can?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"It's mesel' will be the ould woman, an' ye shall be my ould man."

"As ye loike, Bardie, only that ye make shure to evade the police, for ye hev no idea how close the watch will be for ye."

The men made a change in the boat, and when both had assumed their disguises they were fair representatives of a good, honest old Irishman and his wife, and with that they pulled for the shore.

CHAPTER III.

UPON reaching the shore the two men stole across the meadow, and finally struck the road, when our hero's companion said:

"I've a jaunting-car all ready, and shure it's

a good ride we'll hev to Cork. I've plenty to ate and I've plenty to drink."

"Mike, you're a thoughtful friend, and I'll never forget ye."

"Shure, it's all yer friends hev shared in the thoughtfulness, and it was at joint expense we provided for your journey. We all love ye, Bardie, and we know ye are the true heir, and that ye were wronged of yer rights, and we'll all rejoice should the day come when ye will get possession of yer own."

A short time later an old man and old woman were driving along the road, and they jogged it until morning, and it was then for the first time they were halted by a couple of constables who encountered them upon the road.

"Here, stop where ye are," came the command.

The car was brought to a sudden halt.

"And where are yees going?" came the next question.

It was the old woman who undertook to be spokesman, and she said:

"Shure it's mane men ye are to stop us this way."

"Is it now?"

"It is."

"But we're stoppin' every one going this road."

"Yees are?"

"Yes."

"Well, then it's meaner ye are than I thought yees at first, to go stoppin' every one goin' on mindin' their own business, and it's only yer-sel's mindin' other people's business."

"Go on now, and let us hear no more of your opinions," said one of the constables.

The two travelers were glad to be ordered on, and in due time they reached the city of Cork, and still later our hero arrived at Queens-town, and for two days he was compelled to lay low, until Sunday, when a freight steamer, commonly called an ocean tramp, was compelled to stay over at the steamer port in order to make some repairs to her machinery.

The latter was the chance for which our hero had been waiting, and through the influence of friends he secured a position as fireman on the steamer, and on the following Monday morning bid adieu to the land of his birth.

We will here state that Bardell O'Connor was a remarkable man. He was but five-and-twenty at the time we first introduce him to our readers. He was a singularly handsome young fellow, well-educated, being a graduate of college, and was an accomplished linguist, he having been educated in France and Germany.

There was a great mystery surrounding our hero. He had never known father nor mother, and yet he had been reared in luxury by some secret friend or relative, but never had one word been whispered to him as concerned his real identity until the information came in a most remarkable and unexpected manner, and from a strange source, about a year preceding the opening of our narrative.

We have stated that Bardie had been reared in luxury, and that the supplies had come from some secret source. Such was the fact, and never had he stood face to face with his benefactor; but he received letters from him and instructions as to what he should do, and about the time our hero reached the age of one-and-twenty he received a very important letter from the same mysterious source as his previous letters and supplies had come.

The final letter, for it was a final letter, contained quite a sum in bank-notes and conveyed the information that from the date of the receipt of the letter the young man must look out for himself. He was advised to go to America and carve out his own fortune, but, at the same time, was informed that it was merely a matter of advice, and he was at liberty to follow his own heart, and our hero decided to return to Ireland.

Bardie O'Connor had not always been known as Bardie O'Connor. The name by which his secret benefactor had always addressed him in his many letters was Terence O'Connor; and it was not until our hero had met with a startling adventure that he assumed the name under which he had ever after been known.

Bardie had been in Ireland about a year, and had made his home in Dublin, when a friend wanted him to visit the classic region around Bantry Bay and the lakes of Killarney; and it was when, at Glengariff, he was walking along the road one evening, he met an old crone. The young man stepped aside to let the old woman have the best of the path, when suddenly the

old creature approached him, peered in his face with her wild eyes, and she clutched his hand, and, in the most excited manner, demanded:

"Where did you come from? Has the grave given up its dead?"

Bardie was greatly surprised; and yet there had always remained with him a hope that some day there would come a recognition and a revelation. He was a very smart fellow, and a young man of excellent sense and judgment, and many and many an hour of his leisure time was spent in dreamy contemplation of an answer to the self-proposed questions: "Whence came I? Who am I? When shall I learn?" We will add that the young man indulged quite ambitious dreams as concerned his origin, and he felt himself, without knowing anything to the contrary, second to no man in Ireland, so far as lineage is concerned.

When the old woman uttered the startling ejaculation, a thrill shot through our hero's heart, and he demanded:

"What do you mean, ould mother mine?"

We will here also state that for reasons upon certain occasions Bardie spoke with a rich brogue, but the broad brogue was assumed, as his usual speech was that of an Irishman of education, and his pronunciation was but slightly tinged with the brogue, making his speech rich and pleasant to hear.

"What do I mane?" called back the old crone.

"Yes, that's what I'm askin' ye."

"Ah, boy, me eyes are growin' old, an' I made clear light to see well, but dimly as I see ye standin' there, I consider me question well put."

"It's a queer question ye were afther puttin', ould mother mine."

"Do ye think so?"

"I do."

"Well, it's not the nade of me eyesight that's required now; faith, I'm repeatin' me question. Has the grave given up its dead?"

"And why do ye ask that question?"

"And why do I ask that question?"

"Yes."

"I'll tell ye; I'm no fool, but I stood beside the coffin of one who looked once upon a toime as you look now, and what is more his voice was like your voice. Ah, well I remember every tone. Yes, yes; but mind ye, young man, I change me question, who are ye?"

"And what does it concern you who I am?"

"Well, it may concern ye more than it concerns me; that is true for ye."

"My name is Terence O'Connor."

"Terence O'Connor?"

"Yes."

A moment the old woman was silent, but at length she said:

"I've a bit of advice to give ye."

"I am always willing to listen to good advice."

"Ye are?"

"Yes."

"Well, moind ye, now, from this time out call yersel' Bardie O'Connor, and see what will come some day."

CHAPTER IV.

"Why should I call myself Bardie O'Connor?" demanded our hero,

"Why?" ejaculated the old woman.

"Yes, why?"

"It was your father's name, and a nobler man never lived than your father."

"Is my father dead?"

"He is; and he was murdered in cold blood. I know it; but the world at large believes he died from natural causes; but I tell ye he was murdered."

"Will you tell me all the circumstances?"

"Faith, and if I should do so it might but get ye in trouble."

"You need not fear; but how do you know that Bardie O'Connor, the man who was murdered, was my father?"

"How do I know it?"

"Yes."

"Do ye moind the manner of me address wida I first met ye?"

"I do."

"What did I say?"

"Ye cried out, 'Has the grave given up its dead?'"

"And can ye not moind the m'anin' of the words? Shure they're plain enough!"

"What do they mean?"

"That you are the perfect image of your father as he looked at your age—and he was but

a few years older, I reckon, when he was murdered."

"And who murdered him?"

"I'll never tell ye that, lad; but I always thought there was an heir, and the moment I saw ye I recognized ye."

"Come, my good woman, tell me about my parents."

A moment the old woman meditated, and then said:

"Troth an' I will tell ye all I know! Come sit down beside me there on the bank, an' ye shall know all that I can make known to ye."

The old woman made strange, startling, and tragic revelations to our hero, and put him in possession of facts that settled beyond all question the truth as concerned his parentage; and on the strength of the facts, upon the following day our hero paid a visit to the owner of a large estate in the near vicinity, and at once all the statements of the old woman were confirmed—not by any willing admission, but by an involuntary betrayal; for the lord of the manor, upon beholding the young man, gave utterance to the same exclamation that had fallen from the lips of the old crone; and immediately after he had sought to conceal the betrayal of his own weakness, and when pressed, accounted for his strange ejaculation by telling an entirely different story from that told by the old woman. But, as has been stated, Bardie O'Connor was no fool, and he saw that the revelations made to him by that same old woman were correct.

We are not prepared at present to reveal to our readers the remarkable tale that was told, but later on, under still more exciting circumstances, we will the tale unfold.

From the moment of his meeting with the old crone our hero assumed the name of Bardie O'Connor, and he took up his residence near the place where the revelation had been made. Soon strange stories were told about him, and he was looked upon with great respect and love by the people living around, and soon the young man discovered that he had a bitter foe, and his enemy was the owner of the estate. This foe, this secret enemy, pursued the young man with bitter hatred, and finally managed to make him an outlaw and a fugitive, and the latter fact also went far to confirm the revelations of the old woman, else why should this great land-owner relentlessly pursue a comparatively unknown and friendless youth?

The enemy was stronger than his victim, and, as has been intimated, easily succeeded in making the high-spirited youth an outlaw and a fugitive, and forced the young man eventually to flee from his native land, and it was through these persecutions that he was driven abroad to encounter the thrilling adventures that made him beyond all question the Irish Monte-Cristo, and it is with these thrilling adventures that we have to deal in our narrative; but later on we will make plain to our readers the revelations poured into his ear by the old woman, and explain many other strange and startling and tragic incidents in his career.

As stated in a preceding chapter, Bardie O'Connor lay around Queenstown for a few days, and then secured passage on an ocean tramp steamer; and in good time he was tossing on the wild waves of the Atlantic, bound for New York.

There was but one other passenger on the steamer—a strange old man, who occupied a part of the captain's cabin—a man who rarely appeared on deck, and with whom our hero held no converse until the two were brought together under the most exciting circumstances.

The steamer ran into rough weather when but a few hours out from Queenstown, and upon the fourth day out the sea was a seething mass of boiling foam, and the vessel, which had been laboring terribly, threatened at every moment to make its last plunge and sink to the bottom.

Bardie could be of no assistance, and he sought his berth and slept through a night which must have been one of horror to those who remained awake, and when our hero did awake he crawled upon deck only to make the most terrible discovery. The storm had abated, and the ship was settled deep in the water; indeed at a glance he expected her to go down in one minute, and not a soul was in sight. The crew had evidently deserted the ship, leaving the sleeping passengers on board. Possibly they had forgotten him in the excitement, as it did not seem possible that his fellow-men could thus have left him to his fate deliberately. But he had no time to spend in speculation and regrets; the ship was fast settling; indeed, the decks were already beginning to burst up, pressed by

the gas that formed in compressure as the water filled the hold.

Bardie looked around and his eye fell upon a life raft. It had evidently been gotten out and left when some other means of escape had presented itself to the man who had gotten it ready.

The young man had presence of mind enough to secure some water and provisions that lay near, and which had been provided by the same party who had placed the raft in readiness.

Our hero was a good swimmer. He saw that he had but a moment to spare, and he launched his raft and soon got aboard, and was forcing it away from beside the sinking vessel, when he heard a cry, and upon looking back he saw that another man had been left on the sinking steamer. He recognized the old man, the only other passenger besides himself.

The man ran to the side of the boat and in frantic tones called:

"Come back! come back!"

"To be sure I'll come back," said Bardie, and he sought to do so, but one can not handle a raft as he can a boat, and he called:

"Can ye swim?"

"Yes."

"Well, plunge over into the sea, and I'll save ye."

The passenger made the plunge.

CHAPTER V.

It was with some difficulty that our hero managed to rescue the old gentleman, but he finally got him upon the raft, and as the sea was settling down there seemed a bare chance of their final rescue.

When the old man had recovered somewhat he asked:

"What has happened?"

"Look there," said our hero.

The old man did look in the direction indicated, and both saw the great ship engulfed in the sea. Down she went bow first, and within ten minutes from the time the old man had plunged over the rail from her deck into the sea.

"Were you one of the crew?" asked the old man.

"No, sir; I was a passenger."

"And where is the captain and his crew?"

"That, sir, I can not tell you; I came forth from my berth and found the ship sinking, and, as I supposed, not a soul on board. Yes, sir, until I saw you I supposed I was the only one who had been left upon the sinking ship."

"They must have deserted the ship during the night?"

"Yes, sir."

"And left you and me to our fate?"

"Yes, sir."

"The cold-blooded assassins."

"I will not say that, sir."

"And what other term can you apply to them?"

"Sir, it is possible they expected the ship to go down at any moment, and in the excitement they forgot us."

"But what sort of a captain can he be who will thus desert his passengers?"

"You must remember, sir, that that was not a regular passenger vessel, and I can never believe that we were deliberately and thoughtfully left behind. I shall always hold that in the excitement of the moment we were really forgotten."

We will not dwell upon our hero's experience upon the raft, but it was sixty hours before they were rescued; indeed both men had made up their minds to die, believing that they were out of the track of vessels, when Bardie, just as evening was setting in, espied a ship, and wildly shouted:

"We are saved!"

Fortunately for the two men their signals were seen from the ship, which bore down upon them, and an hour after our hero's first sighting of the vessel he and his companion on the raft were safely taken aboard the steamer, which, as it proved, was bound for New York.

The two rescued men were treated with every kindness by the captain and passengers of the steamer, and it was proposed to make up a purse for them, as it was known that they had lost all their effects when the steamer went down.

The old man who had been rescued with Bardie came to him and said:

"You must decline anything in the way of money that may be offered to you by the passengers."

Bardie flushed and answered:

"You may rest assured I will, sir, without being told to do so."

"I will take care of you," said the old man, and he turned and walked away.

"He is a queer old chap," muttered our hero, and he had good reason for the conclusion, as, until the old man came to speak to him about refusing the purse, he had hardly spoken another word to him, since their rescue from the raft.

When it was made known to our hero that the passengers were making up a purse, Bardie told his informant that he and his companion on the raft were exceedingly grateful, but that neither could accept assistance, as they would be all right when they reached New York.

The weather had become beautiful; the sea after the rescue was as calm and unruffled as a summer lake, and our hero delighted in remaining on deck under the starlight, and one night while thus enjoying the surroundings he met with a thrilling adventure.

He was passing along by the rail when he saw a female figure ascend from the cabin and look about her, and Bardie could hardly repress an exclamation of amazement.

It was a beautiful face he beheld, but it was contorted at the moment by agitation and terror and excitement. Indeed, its owner was so excited she did not observe that she was being watched, and with a cat-like step she walked toward the side of the vessel.

"Great mercy!" exclaimed our hero, as he sprung toward her. "She means to plunge into the sea."

Bardie caught the desperate girl about the waist and drew her back just as she was about to take the fatal leap, and as he drew her away from the side of the vessel he reached down, and peering in her face, asked:

"Are you mad?"

"Yes, I am mad," came the response, in tones so sad and plaintive that it thrilled our hero's heart.

"What could possess you?" he said, "to attempt the plunge into the sea?"

"Do not ask me; and please let me go."

"Yes, and when no one is near you will carry all this beauty to the fishes."

"No; please let me go; I will not make a second attempt."

"I must take you to the captain."

"Oh, please do not do that; I know you are a chivalrous man; you are an Irishman; you will keep my secret?"

"I will keep your secret?"

"Yes."

"But you have revealed no secret to me."

"You know what I just attempted to do?"

The beautiful girl spoke in a weary tone, and in a very low voice.

"Yes, I know what you attempted to do, and it's my duty to see that you are not permitted to attempt it again."

"I will not attempt it again."

"Oh, you may promise."

"I will keep my promise. I swear I will not again attempt to leap into the sea."

The lovely girl aroused herself, and spoke in tones of great decision and firmness.

"I will accept your word and keep your secret," said our hero, and after a moment he added: "There must be some sad reason why you should seek to end your life."

"Yes, there is a sad reason why I should seek to end my life, but there is no good reason why I should do so. I was very cowardly."

"Will you tell me why you sought to jump into the sea?"

A moment the fair girl hesitated, and then said:

"Because I am alone and friendless in the world. There is no other reason why I should seek to die."

"There are circumstances where your reason might serve as an excuse, but where one is young and beautiful like yourself I can not see that it is a sufficient excuse."

The young man spoke in a kindly tone, and releasing his hold upon the fair girl stood and watched her as she glided away.

"Well, well," he muttered, "she is alone in the world and friendless, so am I; and it is the similitude of our two fates that draws me toward her. I will have an eye to that girl."

Three days later our hero landed in New York, and within an hour after his arrival was the hero of a thrilling adventure.

CHAPTER VI.

WE have intimated that our hero sometimes spoke with a broad brogue, and we will here add that upon his arrival in New York he re-

solved to adopt the brogue upon all occasions save when some particular exigency demanded otherwise.

While in Queenstown, previous to his sailing upon the tramp steamer, he had received word that very serious charges had been trumped up against him by his enemy, the wrongful owner of the estates, which our hero had every reason to believe once belonged to his immediate ancestors, and which by right at the very moment should have been in his own possession.

The charges were of such a character that his discovery would lead to extradition, and he furthermore had reason to believe that his enemy would offer, through the authorities, a large reward for his capture, and these facts led the Monte-Cristo to resolve to adopt a dual character. Sometimes he would be the gentleman and at other times the regular Micky Free boy, and he felt well assured that under the two rôles he would be able to baffle all detectives.

As stated at the close of our preceding chapter, Bardie O'Connor met with a startling adventure within an hour after his arrival in New York.

The steamer landed at her dock after dark, but when it was still early in the evening, and the passengers made an immediate rush to get ashore, as it was known that all baggage would have to wait until the following morning for custom inspection, save what little hand baggage might be carried off for immediate and necessary use.

Our hero had no baggage, and he was among the first to pass down the gang-plank and land on the dock, and as he stood watching the other passengers descend his eyes fell upon the young lady whom he had prevented from leaping into the sea.

He had seen but little of the mysterious girl after the incident alluded to, she having remained in her state-room, but he kept a constant watch over her during the remainder of the voyage, as he had reached the conclusion that she was the heroine of some tragic event. Indeed it struck him that she, like himself, was a fugitive, and he had become deeply interested in her fate, and very desirous of learning her history, and the true cause of her attempt to leap into the ocean.

As stated, he saw her descend to the wharf, and as she moved off toward the street he followed her, and strangely enough a moment later he saw another man following her, and the actions of pursuer number two were very strange.

The girl reached the street; every one was excited; hackmen were shouting, and relatives of the landed passengers were hurrying here and there; every one was looking out for themselves save our hero and the man who was evidently upon the track of the mysterious female passenger.

Upon reaching the street the latter stood for a moment, evidently undecided which way to go. Several hackmen accosted her, but to their offers of a conveyance she made no answer, and at length she crossed the street, and was proceeding up the thoroughfare leading from the river, when suddenly a carriage drew to the curb. A man alighted, and was joined quickly by the man whom our hero had seen following the girl, and the latter accosted her.

Bardie O'Connor did not know what to do, and was watching the incident, when suddenly the two men seized the girl, stifled her cries, and carried her struggling to the coach, into which they thrust her, and away drove the carriage at a rapid gate.

For an instant only Bardie was overcome with astonishment, and then, with a muttered ejaculation, he started to follow the coach, and he was compelled to run like a deer. Fortunately he did not encounter any pedestrians for a couple of squares, and then the driver of the coach slackened the speed of his horses and drove at a more leisurely gait, thus enabling our hero to follow with greater ease, and again, fortunately, the coach was not driven a long distance before it was brought to a halt.

Bardie had made up his mind how to act while running in pursuit of the coach. The manner of the girl's abduction was sufficient to him to indicate that the men had no right to thus seize her—that on the face of it their action was illegal and an outrage—and he determined to rescue her without stopping to ask any questions. He was a powerful fellow, a practical athlete and pugilist, and felt himself well able to assail the two abductors.

The moment the carriage halted the men alighted and lifted the girl from the coach, and

as she offered no resistance our hero deemed that she had either been drugged or had become insensible through fright. He dashed forward, and in a low, firm tone as he approached, said:

"Unhand the lady, ye villains!"

One of the men did unhand the girl, and he sprung toward Bardie and sought to deal our hero a powerful blow, but instead received one himself, which sent him reeling to the middle of the street, where he fell, and at once the young Irishman leaped toward villain number two, and as the man let go the girl, who fell to the walk, he, too, received a blow which sent him under the horses' feet, and the latter commenced to dance and prance over him, causing him to yell with fright.

Bardie did not stop to ask any questions, but raised the girl in his arms and darted away with her. Turning the first corner and seeing an alley-way he darted in and walked back, and had gone but a few steps when he was hailed with the question:

"Is that you, Mike?"

The speaker was an Irishman, and our hero felt reassured in hearing the voice of a country woman, and he said:

"No, madame, it's not Mike but it's countryman of your own who nades help and rescue."

"Eh? what's that yer sayin'?"

"Do ye live hereabouts, madame?" asked Bardie.

"Troth an' I do."

"And will ye give yer people shelter for a few moments until I can explain to ye why I ask it?"

"I can, shure; come this way; and is it a lady ye hev in yer arms there?"

"It is, shure."

"Well, do ye moind, ef yer up to any divilment I'll send for a cop at onct, but ye can come in and I'll hear what ye hev to say."

The woman opened the door of a rear tenement house and our hero carried his burden inside and laid her upon a lounge in the room.

"Is the lady dead?" demanded the woman.

"No, madame, I do not think she's dead, but she's been drugged, an' it's insensible she is from fright."

"Well, well, now, what does all this mane? But we'll see can we bring the lady back to life."

CHAPTER VII.

BARDIE and the good-hearted Irish woman set to work to revive the insensible girl, and soon they recognized signs of returning consciousness, and at the same instant the Irish woman remarked as she sniffed:

"Well, well, do ye moind?"

"Moind what?" asked Bardie.

"Do ye not smell it?"

"Smell what?"

"Faith, it's plain enough, shure. It's chloroform. I can smell it as plain as though it were a cut onion."

"Yer right," said Bardie.

"The girl was chloroformed as shure as yer live, and who did it; did you, yer villain?"

"I did not," answered Bardie, "and if ye will wait a moment till the girl fully revives I will explain it all to yer."

"Yer must."

"I will."

"An' I'll see that ye do. Shure what a purty creature she is, and so young and innocent-looking; faith it wer' a shame whoever dosed her wid the slaping stuff."

The young lady had indeed been chloroformed, and in good time the effects wore off, and she looked wildly about, demanding:

"Where am I?"

"Shure, darlin', ye are safe enough; ye nade have no fear now, whatever wer' done to ye aforetime."

Bardie stepped into the shadow. He did not wish the girl to see him until she had recovered fully from her first bewilderment.

After a few moments she appeared to fully recover, and she asked:

"What has happened?"

"Shure, miss, there is no one here who can tell ye better than this man, and he will give a fair explanation, or by the powers I'll tell the police on him."

Bardie stepped to the front, and at once the victim of the outrage recognized him, and she exclaimed:

"You here?"

"Yes, miss, I'm here, and shure it's lucky for you. I reckon, that I wer' there a minute

ago, or no one knows what might have happened."

"What has happened?"

"First let me make an explanation to this good woman who gave us shelter for the time being."

"Yes, it's an immediate explanation ye'll give me, for I do not understand this at all, I'm tellin' ye's that."

"My good woman, this lady and I were passengers on the steamer that just arrived an hour or so ago at her dock. I had no particular acquaintance with the lady—shure I do not know her name now—but when I came ashore I waited on the dock awhile to see the passengers land, and I saw this lady descend from the ship, and I saw her walk off the dock, and at the same time I saw a fellow wid a wicked face stare afther her, and I didn't like his looks nor his actions, and says I to mesel' that feller is up to some divilment, and I'll just follow and keep me eye on him. Well, the lady left the wharf and reached the street, and she started to go up another street leading from the one that runs along wid the river, and whin she had crossed there was a carriage druv up and was stopped, a man lept out, and the other man who had been followin' the girl joined him, an the two of them seized the girl and run her into the carriage, and away the carriage was driven, and away I sped after it, and when it stopped I wer' at hand, and I commanded them to let go the girl whin they lifted her from the coach, and one of thim made a clip at me, and I gave it to him and away he went reeling to the street and down he went into the mud, and I made for the other one, and he made a lick at me, and I gave him one that sent him under the horses' feet, and then I seized the lady, and I brought her here, and that's all I know about it, and what more there is to tell the lady must spake for herself. Shure, it's all a mystery to me, and the why and the wherefore, so it is, shure."

The victim of the outrage listened with dilated eyes to the statement of our hero, as also did the old woman who had given the parties shelter, and after a moment the girl said:

"A part of what this gentleman has said I know to be true. I did cross the street; two men did seize me and force me into a carriage, and I recollect no more until I find myself here."

"Well, well! this is a strange tale," exclaimed the old woman; "and why did the men seize ye?"

"I do not know."

"And ye were a passenger in the steamer?"

"Yes."

"And yer friends didn't meet ye?"

"I have no friends to meet me; I am a total stranger in this country."

"And yet came out here alone?"

"Yes."

"And ye had no particular place to go whin ye arrived?"

"I did not."

"And what did ye come here for, my dear?"

"Like many others; to earn a living and keep myself from starvation."

"Faith, child, ye may face a worse fate than starvation in this city. And ye hev no friends, and what will ye do?"

"I shall seek a situation as governess."

"Ah! ye are an edicated lady, eh? Well, ye may foind a situation afther a toime, but what will ye do until ye do?"

"I have a little money to pay my expenses until I find a situation."

"Well, I'm sorry for ye, so I am. It's little help I can be to yet, for I'm no recommendation for ye as a governess, but if it is as cook or chamber-maid ye will go out, shure I can aid ye."

"If I can not succeed in getting a position as teacher or governess I shall be glad to go out as a chamber-maid."

"Faith, ye are rather fair and delicate for house-work, but ye moight get strength afther a bit, and ye'd be much safer, wid yer purty face, as a chamber-maid than ye would workin' in a shop. But where will ye go to-night?"

"I shall have to look up a place."

"Ye'll not go forth again to-night, so ye shan't. Shure I'll kape ye here till mornin'. Shure I'm a widdier wid one boy—Mike—and it was him I thought it wer' come home whin I heard ye's in the alley-way. But it's only onct a week he comes home to me, and yet can stay here as well as not. But yet friend there—faith I've no place for him, and he must luk out for himself."

"No trouble about me," said Bardie; "I'll

take care o' mesel' well enough, but I've a word to say to the lady."

The beautiful girl looked up at our hero in a confiding manner, and he continued:

"Ye will remain here with this good woman until to-morrow, until I come for ye; do ye hear?"

"I will remain here until you come."

"If I am delayed ye must stay till ye see me."

"I will wait here until you come."

"Very well. I'll be here on time, and then we can talk over matters. I've no notion to let ye fall into the hands of thim ruffians again."

CHAPTER VIII.

AN incident had occurred the day before the arrival of the steamer which we will here record. Bardie's fellow-passenger on the wrecked steamer, as has already been intimated, was a very peculiar man. Our hero had not spoken to him previous to the wreck at all, and, strangely enough, after their rescue the man had said but little to the young Irishman to whom he owed his life; but on the day preceding the landing of the steamer he had accosted the young man.

"I never asked your name," said the gentle man.

"No more you did, sir."

"Well?" ejaculated the stranger, interrogatively.

"Well, again, to ye," answered Bardie.

"What is your name?"

"My name is Bardie O'Conor."

"You are an Irishman?"

"I am, sir."

"From what part of Ireland?"

"Bantry, sir."

"Yes, I know the town, I've been there; it is the town where you take the stage upon leaving the train from Cork to ride to Glengarriff."

"The same, sir."

"You are not rich?"

"Well, sir, if I had me own I would be, but as another has it I am not."

"You have given me your real name?"

"I hev, sir; an' while I'm thinkin' of it, sir, I ask that ye would not repeat me name, for it's under another name I wer' registered on the steamer that wer' wrecked, and it's another name ag'in I've given here on board this steamer."

"You are traveling under an assumed name?"

"I am, sir."

"You have a reason?"

"I have, sir."

"A good one, I know," said the stranger.

"Thank ye, sir, for yer good opinion."

"You are a generous and a noble man."

"Am I, sir?"

"You are."

"And how do you know?"

"I've watched you, and to you I owe my life. You came back to the wreck at the risk of your own life to rescue me; I'll never forget your heroism. Have you any objection to telling me about yourself?"

"I have, sir."

"Very well; I'll not press you to do so, but it may be wise if you shall decide to do so without urging."

A strange impulse led our hero to decide to trust the man whose life he had certainly saved. He had recognized that the man was a queer fellow, but, again, he had decided that he was a good man at heart, although so strange in his manners.

"You have not told me your name, sir?"

"Do you wish to know my name?"

"Yes, sir; I would like to know the name of the man who was with me during the terrible hours we were upon the raft."

"My name is John Kneiss. Can you remember that name?"

"I can, sir; it is such a nice name to fix to one's attention, it is so odd, shure."

The strange gentleman smiled at Bardie's pun or play upon the sound of names, and he said:

"It will be well to remember my name. I live in California—in San Francisco. You may come there some day; if you do come and see me."

"If I ever go to California, sir, I will call on you, and do ye moind, I've a notion to tell ye all about meself."

"I wish you would."

"I will, sir."

Bardie proceeded and told his tale. He did not conceal one fact concerning himself, and the gentleman listened with a great deal of in-

terest, and when our hero had concluded Mr. Kneiss said, abruptly:

"You have no money?"

"Nothing but the clothes on me back."

"And how will you live when you reach New York?"

"Faith, sir, I'll knock around until I get something to do. I reckon I will not starve."

"No, you must not starve; you are too good a man. You have never been in America before?"

"Never, sir."

"Let me see—you can find your way around the city?"

"I reckon I can, sir; I have me tongue."

"Good! You will call the morning after our arrival at No. — Wall Street. You will find the firm of —; present yourself there and give them this card."

Mr. Kneiss wrote a few words on a card and handed it to our hero, and said:

"Do not fail to call."

On the card was written:

"This is Patrick Carr."

Patrick Carr was the assumed name of Bardie O'Conor.

"I will call there, sir."

"I would not advise you to remain in New York."

"Why not, sir?"

"Well, you had better not, that is all. And now, I may never see you again, and I may; we can not tell what will happen in life. But whether we ever meet again or not you will know that I shall always bear you in grateful remembrance; and it is possible we may hear of each other again. Here is an envelope; it contains an address and a note. Do not break the seal of the envelope unless some time you get in serious trouble, and then, if you do, open the letter and follow the directions therein contained. And now, good-bye; but remember, do not fail to visit Wall Street the morning after our arrival in New York."

John Kneiss did not again address our hero during the remaining hours of the voyage to New York, and upon the night of the landing Bardie did not see him at all, and, in fact, in the excitement of the moment did not think of him.

We have detailed to our readers what immediately followed the arrival of our hero, and, as related at the close of our preceding chapter, we stated how he bid the girl whom he had rescued to remain with Mrs. Maguire, the woman who had given them shelter, until he called for her upon the following day.

Bardie had not asked the girl's name, nor had he given his own, nor had he asked her any further questions concerning herself. He bid her good-night and told her to be brave and hopeful and fear not.

Bardie left the house in the alley-way and walked forth to the street. He did not anticipate danger, and took no precautions to avoid any, but marched along, thinking over in his mind the events of the night.

The fugitive had said he had no money, but fortunately at the time he escaped from the sinking steamer he had one five-dollar gold piece in his pocket, and a one-dollar piece, and that was all the capital he had in the world. He walked along, not knowing which way he went, and little caring, as it was all the same to him. One fact was certain, he was not going home, and one place was as good as another. It was still early in the evening, and he soon struck upon Broadway, and the brightness and brilliancy of the scene caused him to exclaim:

"Well, well, this is Fairy-land, shure."

He turned up the great thoroughfare, and was staring at the many brilliant signs when suddenly a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

CHAPTER IX.

BARDIE turned in surprise and looked at the man who had touched him upon the shoulder. He beheld a shrewd-faced fellow, who said, as he extended his hand:

"Halloo, old man, how do you do?"

"Ye hev the better of me," said Bardie.

"Don't you remember me?"

"Faith and I do not remember ye; I never saw yer face afore to me knowledge."

"I met you in Queenstown the day before you sailed."

"Yer did?"

"Certainly I did."

"Now, see here, me friend, ye are mistaken."

"No, I am not; I can name the steamer in which you sailed."

"Yer can?"

"Yes."

"Would yer moind doin' so?"

The man named the very steamer on which Bardie had sailed from Queenstown, but our hero did not betray any surprise, as he said, with a laugh:

"Shure I knew he had made a mistake."

"Didn't you sail on that steamer?"

"I did not; shure I never heard of such a ship."

"Nonsense! Why do you say so? Isn't your name Bardie O'Connor?"

"No, sir; me name is not Bardie O'Connor, and, do ye moind, I've an idea what yer game is, but ye can't play it on me. I've some knowledge of the games ye play in New York, but ye can make no fool of me. Shure I don't believe there is any such ship as the one ye mentioned, nor do I believe there is any such person as the one ye name; and, what is more, I hev never been in Queenstown in me life. When I sailed for America, a year ago, I started from Glasgow, crossing over from Belfast, do ye moind; and, do ye moind further, I don't want yer to try and come any of yer snap games over me. I'm no stranger here, nor am I as green as I look."

"It's possible I've made a mistake," said the stranger.

"Shure ye hev made a mistake, and ye had better make off wid yerself, or begorra I'll hand ye over to the police, so I will. I'm no fool, and I'm up to yer tricks, do ye moind, and ye can't fool and rob me. Shure, as I told ye, I don't believe there is such a ship as the one ye named, and I'm thinking ye coined the name ye mentioned, and it's now I'm biddin' of ye good-evenin', and ye may consider yerself lucky I don't hand ye over to the police."

"It's all right," said the man, with a laugh, and he turned off down the street, while our hero walked along in the opposite direction, as he had been proceeding when hailed by the stranger.

As Bardie walked along he muttered:

"Beggorra, it is all right, but on me word that wer' a narfow escape, shure. He knew me name well enough, and he named the ship in which I sailed. Well, well, me enemy has got word over here ahead of me, and if I'm not a fool in me calculations that feller was an American detective, and he is on the lookout for one Bardie O'Connor, and do ye moind, it's Bardie O'Connor will be on the lookout for the detectives, and its smart they are if they catch me asleep; but, be the powers, it's lucky I have the money to work a change in me appearance, or they may give me a close hunt all night. We'll see about it, that's all."

Bardie kept on along Broadway until he reached Twenty-third Street, and then he turned down toward Sixth Avenue, and he had proceeded but a short distance when he became aware that there was a man following him.

"Be the powers!" he muttered, "I do not loike that altogether. Shure, there is a man dogging me steps."

Bardie walked along until he crossed a glare of light that shot forth from a brilliantly lighted restaurant, and then he slackened his pace and turned suddenly just in time to catch a full view of the man who was following him.

The man, for a moment, was under the strong light, and our hero had a good, square view of him, and recognized the fact that it was not the same man who hailed him on Broadway, and yet it struck him he had seen the man before; and as he walked along suddenly it flashed across his mind that the fellow following him was one of the men from whom he had rescued the girl immediately after the landing from the steamer.

"Well, now, that is quare," muttered Bardie.

We will here stare again that our hero had resolved to speak with a broad brogue at all times, even when soliloquizing, and he had good reasons for so doing, and his resolve was strengthened after his encounter with the man on Broadway.

Upon deciding that the man who was following him was one of the two who had sought to abduct the girl, he made up his mind to give the fellow a chance to overtake him, muttering at the same time:

"He is not on my track as Bardie O'Connor, and shure I may find out somewhat of the game they were playin' when they sought to stale the girl into the carriage."

Bardie reached Sixth Avenue, and finally

after strolling down that avenue a short distance entered a lager beer saloon, saying:

"I'll see if the feller will follow me in, and if he does mebbe he'll open his head, and I'll get on to him shure. There's a game of some kind goin' on, and it's quare how I've run into a series of adventures within an hour after my arrival in New York, but it's likely I'll meet wid many of them afore I touch foot again on the good old shores of Bantry Bay."

Bardie entered the saloon, and seeing a pile of sandwiches on the bar he called for a sandwich and a glass of lager, and seating himself at a table commenced to eat. A few moments only passed and he saw the man who had been following him enter the saloon, and he at once fully identified him as one of the men whom he had knocked down in defense of the mysterious young lady.

The man peered around, and finally his eyes rested upon our hero, and there came a satisfied and pleased look to his face, and he stepped across the room and took a seat at the very same table where Bardie had located. He also called for a sandwich and a glass of lager.

Bardie was not at all disturbed. There was one trait he possessed to a remarkable degree, and that was nerve and coolness. He was one of the nerviest men in the world; nothing caused him to lose his head, as the saying goes; and as he was an adventurer, with nobody but himself in the world to look out for, as far as he knew, he carried his life and comfort in his hands, and was ready at all times for whatever fortune might open up to him.

Bardie was also a very keen observer and a good reader of men's faces, and he discovered at a glance that the man who had been following him was seeking to have a few words with him, and he discerned, further, that the man did not suspect that he had been recognized, and our hero gave no sign that he had recognized the man. Indeed, he was prepared to play as deep a game as the fellow who was playing against him.

For a few moments the men sat eating and drinking their beer without the exchange of a word, but at length the stranger said:

"I think I've seen you before."

CHAPTER X.

BARDIE was cool as a frozen chicken as he looked the man over, and after a moment said:

"Ye think ye hev seen me afore?"

"Yes."

"Well, is there anything wonderful in that? Shure, mebbe I've seen you afore, but I don't moind that iver I did."

"You've just landed?"

"What is that yer sayin'?"

"You've just landed?"

"Just landed, is it?"

"Yes."

"And what do you mane by that?"

"You have just arrived in New York."

"Do ye think so?"

"Yes."

"Well, yer off—way off—there. I've lived in New York these five or six years, do ye moind."

"You have?" exclaimed the stranger, in surprise.

"To be sure I hev, and what difference does it make whether it's so or not, since I don't owe you anything?"

"It's possible I may mistake you for another person."

"Mebbe it is possible, and mebbe ye did see me afore. Shure I'm not certain, when I come to look at ye, that I don't remember seein' you afore. Who gave you that thump on the nose? Shure it was a good one, by the mark ye hev there!"

It was true, the man's nose and cheek did bear the mark of a blow, and the fellow turned pale when our hero made an allusion to the thump he had received.

"I was struck to-night," said the man.

"Yes, ye look as though ye had received a good un, and did ye deserve it?"

"What difference does that make to you?"

"None at all; shure, it's none of my business, and do ye moind I did not first address meself to you, but it wer' you who spoke first to me, and, now, if ye hev got tired ye can quit as soon as he plaze, it's all the same to me. But ye wer' claimin' ye had seen me afore, and I were merely seekin' to find out wer' the recognition mutual and whether I'd ever seen you afore."

"But what has all that to do with the mark on my face?"

"Well, ye say ye think ye hev seen me afore?"

"Yes."

"And ye hev received a thump?"

"I was struck by a man."

"Well, do ye moind it's by that I'm seekin' to identify ye, although I do not remember faces."

"What has that to do with the identification?"

"Well, I gave a couple of fellers a thump apiece to-night, and I thought mebbe ye moight be one of them, and that's how it comes ye thought ye had seen me afore."

The man glared when our hero so openly avowed that he was the man who had rescued the girl.

"You did strike two men to-night?"

"Yes, I did."

"What was the provocation?"

"Well, it wer' good enough, accordin' to my reckonin'."

"Will you tell me all about it?"

"Why should I tell you all about it?"

"I am deeply interested."

"Ye are?"

"Yes."

"And were you one of the men I thumped?"

"I may have been."

"And do ye want me to give ye another one?"

"No; I want to learn why you assailed me before."

"Then you admit that you were one of the men?"

"Yes, I was one of the men."

"Well, do ye moind, ye hev a hard cheek, and I wonder there is any mark on yer face from the clip I gave ye; and what is it ye want now? Hev ye been following me to get satisfaction; ef ye hev shure I'm at yer service; shure I'm not quarrelsome, no, sir; but I'm accommodatin', yes, I'm shure, always."

"I do not desire to quarrel with you," said the man, and he spoke in a soft and very gentle tone; indeed, his whole manner had been courteous and cat-like.

"And what do you want?"

Bardie spoke in a rather loud tone when he put the question, and there were quite a number of men in the room, and the stranger waved our hero to speak low.

"All right, and now what is it ye want; shure I know ye hev been following me."

"I met you accidentally."

"You did?"

"I did."

"And then ye started in to follow me?"

"I did."

"Well, what is it ye want?"

"You remember the circumstances under which you dealt me that blow?"

"I remember the circumstances under which I gave a blow to some one."

"I will admit I am the man you struck."

"Well?"

"You remember the circumstances?"

"I do."

"What were they?"

"There wer' a lady being taken from a carriage."

"What did you know about that lady?"

"Nothing."

"You did not know her?"

"I knew nothing about here, shure I don't know her name now, shure."

"And yet you interfered?"

"I did."

"And carried her away after you had knocked two men down?"

"Yes, I believe I did carry her away."

"How did you come to do so?"

"Shall I tell you?"

"I desire that you should tell me."

"And suppose now I do not tell you?"

"If you will not I can't compel you."

"Ah, it's very nice you are in your speech, shure. Well, now, I'll tell ye me opinion."

"Do."

"It's me opinion yees were up to some bad game wid the lady."

"My friend, I'm giving you a chance."

"Ye are? What sort of a chance?"

"To explain. You have committed a very grave offense, and I can have you in jail in less than an hour."

"Ye can?"

"I can."

"Well, go ahead."

"Go ahead?"

"Yes."
 "How?"
 "And put me in jail?"
 "I do not desire to do that."
 "Ye don't?"
 "No."
 "Faith an' I believe ye, for ye are more
 afeard of the jail yersel' than I am, do ye
 moind?"
 "We will not talk about that now; you may
 need a friend."
 "Sure we all need friends betimes."
 "I may be your friend and do you a good
 turn."
 "Yeas may?"
 "Yes."
 "And what good turn shall I do ye first?"
 "Tell me how you came to interfere with the
 arrest of the young lady?"
 "With her arrest?"
 "That's what I said."
 "And ye want to know how I came to inter-
 fere?"
 "I do."

A moment Bardie meditated. It ran through
 his mind that possibly, after all, there might be
 some truth in what the man said. He did not
 fancy the man's good nature; under all the cir-
 cumstances there was something very ominous
 in the man's absolute calm and easy manner,
 especially in the presence of a man who had
 knocked him down.

"See here, mister, I don't know what yer
 name is, I had good reason for interferin' to
 save the girl."

"I suppose you had, and will you name your
 reason?"

"Faith and I will," came the answer.

CHAPTER XI.

BARDIE was really a very shrewd fellow and
 a very rapid thinker, and certain facts began to
 group themselves in his mind, and he began to
 feel just a trifle of respect for the man who bore
 the mark of his fist upon his cheek. Our hero
 sat a moment in a meditative mood, when the
 stranger said:

"Come; you are to tell me why you inter-
 fered."

"I will."

"Do so."

Bardie related, fictitiously, how he was a
 worker on the dock, and then he told, truth-
 fully, how he had seen the girl seized upon and
 run into the carriage, and how he had followed
 the carriage and made the rescue. When he
 had concluded the man said:

"I think you have told me the truth."

"I hev, sir. Shure I've no interest in the
 girl, save that I tuk her away from yees."

"Now, answer me one more question: Where
 did you take the girl?"

"Where did I take her?"

"Yes."

"Well, do ye moind, I found her insensible."

"Well?"

"I tuk her in me arms."

"Proceed."

"I carried her around the corner. Ye will
 remember it wer' near the corner where I found
 yees?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'd carried her but a bit when she
 opened her eyes, and says she: 'Let me go.'
 Well, I had no right with her, and I did let her
 go; and go she did, and I've not seen her
 since."

The man was thoughtful for a moment, and
 then asked:

"Where did you go?"

"Where did I go?"

"Yes."

"Well I wandered off, sir; yes, I did, and
 that's all."

"And you know nothing about the girl?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Where do you live?"

"See here, now, I've answered your ques-
 tions pretty well, and I think it's none of yer
 business where I live."

"I have something to tell you, my friend."

"Faith, I'm always a good listener."

"I am an officer."

"Ye are?"

"I am."

"Well, now, that's quare."

"I am a detective."

"Well, well!"

"That girl was a prisoner."

"Well, well!"

"You rescued a prisoner from the officers."

"Well, well!"

"And it is my duty to arrest you."

"Well, well! did ye iver hear the loike of
 that?"

"I must know all about you; and if I'm not
 satisfied that your statements are true I must
 arrest you and hold you until the girl is found."

"Well, well!"

"You must tell me where you live."

"Do ye moind," said Bardie, "I've no raison
 to believe that ye are an officer."

"I am."

"Shurely?"

"Yes."

"Well, well! Now, luk here; if ye will tell
 me a good raison for arrestin' that girl I may
 give ye an idea."

"An idea?"

"Yes; I may put ye on her track, for, do ye
 moind, I'm no fool."

"You do not appear like one."

"I'm not; and, whin that girl ran from me,
 faith I just 'skipped' along and kept me eye
 on her; and do ye moind, I've an idea I can put
 me hand on her?"

"That is my idea, my friend; I am no more
 a fool than yourself."

"Well, well!"

"You must tell me where I can find the girl
 or I will arrest you."

"Arrest me?"

"Yes."

"Well, well! Now, see here; will ye give me
 a good raison for yer wantin' to find the girl?"

"I am not bound to give you a reason."

"Nathur am I bound to tell ye where ye can
 find the girl."

"You do not realize that you are in a pretty
 serious scrape."

"Am I, now?"

"You are."

"How?"

"We received a cable from the other side to
 arrest that girl on a very serious charge."

"Indade?"

"There is a large reward offered for her ar-
 rest."

"There is, now? And of what is she ac-
 cused?"

"I can not tell you; but it is a very serious
 crime; and, if you do not tell me where I can
 find her, I shall be compelled to arrest you."

"Faith, that's what ye will have to do.
 Shure I can't tell ye where ye can foind the
 girl."

"I think you can."

"Well, well! You're wrong; yes, sir, ye are
 wrong; but, do ye moind, I'll go with ye and
 show ye where I think she wint. Faith, I've
 no idea of being arrested when I've not done
 wrong."

"Will you go with me?"

"I will."

"At once?"

"Shurely."

"Come."

The two men settled their score and left the
 beer-shop; and, when once on the street, Bardie
 discovered that two other men were following
 them. He recognized then that the so-called
 detective had re-enforcements at hand; but he
 was determined to shake off this new-found
 friend, all the same; when outside the man said:

"There's one thing I wish to tell you: I'm
 prepared for you now."

"Are ye?"

"If you attempt any capers it will be bad for
 you."

"Do ye moind, all I've to do is to give ye
 what information I can?"

"That is all."

The two had reached the cross-street. Bardie
 looked over his shoulder and saw that the two
 other men were half a block to the rear, and the
 side-street looked dark and like a fair course for
 a fugitive; and, as the man said "That is all,"
 Bardie suddenly dealt him a clip behind the ear
 that sent him reeling, accompanied with the ex-
 clamation:

"Well, take that first!"

As the man reeled, Bardie started to run like
 a deer down the side-street, and, indeed, he was
 a good runner. Reaching the avenue, he turned
 to the north and ran for some distance, when he
 doubled on his track, crossing to the opposite
 side of the street, and, making a turn, moved
 along back to the very corner where he downed
 the detective.

"Well," he muttered, "I think I've lost
 them."

Our hero was not at all acquainted in the city,
 but he took a straight course and reached Broad-

way, when he turned southward and walked
 down several squares, and, crossing to a parallel
 street, made a second turn and reached the
 Bowery.

We will here remark that every time he made
 a turn he took the bearings; and, so clear and
 accurate was his memory, that he could have
 retraced his steps and have gone straight to the
 tenement where Mrs. Maguire resided had he
 so desired. As it was, he kept on down the
 Bowery until he came to one of the many cheap
 lodging-houses, when he entered and registered,
 paid his money, and was shown to a room. No
 questions were asked, as no information was re-
 quired in the place where he sought a night's
 refuge. These places are open for all. You
 pay your money and go where you are "put,"
 and our hero was soon "put," and very soon
 afterward was sound asleep, caring little for his
 surroundings and only anxious to rest.

Upon the following morning Bardie awoke
 and passed down to the street. He entered a
 cheap restaurant and settled down to a hearty
 meal.

CHAPTER XII.

WHILE at his meal Bardie thought over the
 situation, and he was compelled to remark,
 mentally, that he seemed to have fallen into an
 odd lot of adventures since his departure from
 Ireland, and he pondered more carefully the
 words of the detective.

Bardie could not believe the fair girl whom
 he had rescued was a criminal, and yet he did
 believe that she was being pursued on some
 criminal charge; and he was the better prepared
 to believe in her innocence because of the fact
 that he, also, was being pursued on a trumped-
 up charge, and he was certainly conscious of his
 own innocence. He was still meditating upon
 the previous night's adventures when a lad en-
 tered the restaurant with the daily papers. Our
 hero bought one, and, after reading awhile, was
 startled to behold his own name in print.

There was a full account of the wreck of the
 tramp steamer on which our hero had been a
 passenger, and also a narrative of the rescue of
 the two missing passengers, accompanied with
 the further information that it was suggested
 that one of the passengers was Bardie O'Conor,
 a man for whom there was a reward of two
 thousand pounds; and the account contained a
 description of Brdie, and intimated, further,
 that the detectives were on the man's track, and
 that he would soon be captured and returned to
 Ireland.

Bardie O'Conor was a young man of iron
 nerve. He read the account through carefully,
 and not a muscle quivered; nor did his face
 change expression; nor was there the slightest
 tremor in his hand; nor did his appetite slacken.
 He finished his breakfast with as much calm-
 ness as he had commenced it, but he kept up
 considerable thinking. It was plain that his
 enemy in Ireland had trailed him to Queens-
 town, had discovered how he had left Ireland,
 had cabled to New York for his arrest, and, be-
 sides, there was evidence that he intended to
 pursue our hero to the bitter end.

"Well, well, it's all right! I've had a nar-
 row escape, that is certain," muttered Bardie;
 "but I am forewarned now, and I'll be on my
 guard. One fact is certain: the first fellow I
 met must have been a detective, and he is the
 one who is on my track. The second detective
 was not seeking for me as Bardie O'Conor;
 but," added the fugitive, after a moment, "it
 is strange the similarity between my fate and
 that of the beautiful young lady whom I res-
 cued, and, by my faith, I'll stand by her yet.
 I'll make common cause with her against those
 detective hounds, and if they take her they'll
 take me; but now what must I do?"

Bardie remembered his promise to visit the
 place in Wall Street, as requested by his fellow-
 passenger upon the raft; and at the same time
 he fully realized his risk in keeping his prom-
 ise. It was a pretty serious thing to have de-
 tectives on one's track; especially when one is
 an absolute stranger in the city, not practically
 knowing one street from another, and liable at
 any moment to arrest.

Bardie was in no hurry to leave the restaurant.
 He pretended to be reading the paper, but in
 fact he was thinking over the situation. He had
 but little money, and it was necessary that he
 should change his appearance. His garb was a
 plain "give-away." He sat thinking over mat-
 ters, and mechanically let his eyes wander
 around, and he discovered that the keeper of
 the restaurant was an Irishman, and he saw that

he was an honest, well-meaning and good-hearted man. Our hero recognized these traits without ever having spoken to the man; and after a time he said, in a low, meditative tone:

"In that man's goodness rests my safety."

There was one waiter in the place—a young Irish lad—and Bardie beckoned the boy to him and asked him to send his boss to the table. There were no other customers in the place, and its proprietor approached and took a seat at the table opposite to our hero.

"From what part of Ireland did you come?" asked Bardie.

"I came from Dublin."

"And how long have you been in America?"

"Five years."

"And what led ye to lave the Ould Dart?"

"And what is that to you?"

"Well, if it wer' nothing to me I'd not be afther askin' ye."

"I came here because I chose to come."

We have frequently intimated, during the course of our narrative, that Bardie was a very shrewd and observant man. He was, in fact, a born detective. He read men like a book, and he was fully capable of contracting his observations and so grouping them as to reach certain deductions; and he at once reached a conclusion from the fact that the proprietor of the little *café* betrayed irritation when asked his reasons for having immigrated from his native land.

"Have you forgotten ould Ireland?" demanded Bardie.

"I niver hev and I niver will," came the answer.

"Do ye iver expect to return?"

"I do."

"Whin?"

"What is that to you?"

"It may be much or it may be little; but I'm askin' ye the question all the same."

The restaurant man was a shrewd fellow, and, looking keenly at our hero, he said, after a moment:

"Ye hev a raison for cross-questioning me?"

"Shure I hev."

"And what is yer raison?"

"Well, I'll not attempt to decaive you. I'm not certain when I shall return mesel'."

"And what may yer name be?"

"Wait now till I luk ye clare in the face before I answer ye."

"Luk; and it's an honest face, me boy."

"I believe ye."

"Well?"

"Hev ye read the mornin' papers?"

"I hev."

"Well?"

"Be the powers, but it's Bardie O'Connor ye are!"

"If ye spake that name loud ye're a mane man and no frind of ould Ireland; faith ye're a traitor and a villain."

The restaurant man, whose name was O'Shayne, reched over and said, in a low tone:

"Ye nade not fear me, my man; but what is it ye are accused of that they're afther ye?"

"I'm accused of murderin' a collector."

"Ye are?"

"Yes."

"And what are ye guilty of, me man?"

"Bein' a patriot and a lover of me race and the traditions of ould Ireland."

"And why hev ye made yersel' known to me?"

"Can ye not guess?"

"I can not."

"I nade a frind; that's why I've put me fate in yer hands."

"Shure, man, there's a large reward offered for yer capture and delivery."

"There is; but that's no temptation to you."

"Yer right; I'd lose me loife before I'd raise a hand to put ye in charge."

"I knew it."

"Yer did?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Faith, I could read yer wer' an honest man in yer face, and it's for that raison I gave mesel' away to ye."

"And hev ye any friends in America?"

"Yes, one."

"And where is he?"

"Here," came the answer.

CHAPTER XIII.

There followed a moment's silence, when O'Shayne said:

"Shure, ye would make me yer friend by the confidence ye put in me."

"That's what I was after shure, and I knew it."

"And what will ye do? Shure, the detectives are on yer track."

"I know that; didn't I give one of thim a toss last night; but I didn't know at the toime his game."

Bardie related his adventure with the detective, the one who had called him by name.

"Ye had a narrow escape, so ye did?"

"I did; but I'm all right now."

"And what do yer mane to do? Ye must get out of New York."

"Sorra a step will I get out of New York."

"Ye'll be caught shure; faith the best detectives in the world are here."

"I don't moind them for me little finger, only I hev one friend who will save me now."

"And what is it ye want?"

"I'll tell ye; I've one pound, do ye moind, and I've me watch. Now it's the money ye can hev and the watch I'll lave wid ye, only ye will get me a change of clothes, so whin I lave this place they'll not pounce on me at the first go and unawares."

"I'll stand to ye as yer frind, so I will, at all costs; but do ye moind, ye must lave here."

"I must?"

"Yes."

"And where will I go?"

"West."

"In good time mebbe I will, but not to-day nor to-morrow."

"Bardie, ye must hev a care."

"Do ye moind, niver agen must ye call me Bardie; shure I thought ye would hev moinded that yersel'."

"Yer right; and what is yer name?"

"Michael O'Brien I'll call mesel' until the day comes when I can take back the name me father bore."

"It's Mike I'll call ye?"

"Yes; and call it often, so that like a dog wid a new master I'll learn to wag whin I hear it."

"And what are ye goin' to do, Mike?"

"Make a call."

"Yees are?"

"Yes."

"Upon the mayor?"

"Yes; the Mayor of San Francisco I think he is."

"And what do ye mane?"

"I'll tell ye. I had a passenger wid me on the raft—an ould feller, an American—and I saved his loife, shure."

"Ye did?"

"I did."

"Well?"

"He is a quare man; but he bid me call on him the first thing this mornin'."

"And it's he manes to give ye over to the police."

"Do ye think so?"

"Yes, sure."

"Well, I know better. I was not floatin' round on the raft in mid-ocean wid the man whose loife I had saved not to know his parts. No, sir, I've no danger to fear from that quarter."

"Ye are sure?"

"I am, and I'll stake me loife on it."

"But ye'll run great risk in goin' there."

"I know that."

"Ye had better wait a day or two."

"He bid me come to-day, and it's to-day I'll go; and, if ye will prove the friend to me that ye are, it will be all right."

"Ye will come wid me," said O'Shayne.

The restaurant-keeper called his waiter and gave him certain orders, and then led our hero through a rear door to a side hall, and so up two pairs of stairs to a room on the top floor, when he pointed to a closet and said:

"There; ye will foind all me clothes there, and, as ye and I are of the same build, faith I think they'll fit ye well. I'll return down-stairs, and ye can make a change to suit ye and thin come down."

"How about the lad?"

"Oh, ye nade not moind him."

"He may nade more moindin' than ye think."

"I'll answer for him."

"Remember, it's ten thousand, American money!"

"I'll fix the lad. Shure, ye are me cousin just over, eh?"

"No, that will not do; it's yer cousin from the west I am."

"Oh, but I moind that's better; yes, it's that way we'll hev it; and now ye can tog yersel' out; but it's a great risk yer runnin' all the

same, and if ye would take my advice ye'd lave the city at onct and go west."

"We'll talk that over later on, me good friend; but do ye moind, the day may come when I can do as much for you as ye are doin' for me now."

"Don't ye ever minton that again an ye'd hev me remain yer friend. Shure, it's a fugitive I am mesel', do ye moind, and now I've given confidence for confidence, I'll tell ye more; shure, there is a reward hangin' over me own head, and I am not bearin' me own father's name at this blessed minute, do ye moind, so ye can make yer moind aisy."

O'Shayne left the room, and Bardie set to look over a pretty well assorted wardrobe.

"Shure, he has good clothes, and he is a good-lookin' man, so he is; and it's in luck I am; and it's a long chase I'll be after given them detectives afore they cage me, so I will."

Our hero found razor and brush, and the first thing he did was to shave off all his whiskers, and then selecting a business suit he amazed himself. And a more complete transformation is rarely seen. As he looked in the glass he was compelled to remark:

"Shure I hardly know mesel'."

Our hero was fully an hour in working the transformation, but when he had concluded he was a fine-looking man, indeed, a remarkably genteel and handsome-looking fellow, and there remained not the appearance of the greenhorn about him, nor anything that would suggest a recent arrival in New York. In his changed appearance he was like one to the manor born—a genuine New Yorker as he stood there; and again he muttered:

"Well, well; but I'm a fine-lookin' Yankee after all."

Bardie descended the stairs, and being a great joker he did not enter the store by the door through which he had passed with O'Shayne, but passed out to the street and entered the restaurant through the main door, and going to a table he took a seat, and in good English called for a cup of coffee. The lad served the coffee, and the man O'Shayne looked at his customer, little dreaming of his identity.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a singular incident that O'Shayne did not recognize our hero, even though the latter wore one of his own suits of clothes. But in New York there are many who wear clothes after the same cut and fashion.

Bardie drank off his coffee and advanced to the pay-counter, and in good English, without any tremor in his voice, said:

"Your name is O'Shayne?"

"That is my name."

"You are the proprietor of this place?"

"I am."

"Well, be careful."

"Be careful, is it?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"I am telling you to be careful or you may get into trouble."

The Irish blood of O'Shayne began to boil, and he said:

"Faith, an' if ye don't moind what yer sayin' it's yersel' will hev to be careful, or I'll toss ye into the street shure. Pay for yer coffee and be off wid ye. I don't loike yer looks."

Our hero leaned over and said in a whisper:

"It's reported you are a friend of Bardie O'Connor, the man the detectives are looking for, and they may keep an eye on your place."

"Eh? what's that yer sayin'? Well, now, I don't know who ye are, nor do I care, but whoever tells ye that had better come here and let out their slander to me face and not be goin' behind me back wid their talk."

Our hero laughed, and changing back to the brogue, exclaimed:

"Well, well, ye are a bright man, and ye don't know yer own clothes."

O'Shayne's eyes bulged.

"Be the powers!" he exclaimed, "is it possible?"

"Do ye think now I'd better go west?"

"Well, well, it bates the divil. Shure, ye are the divil or a play actor. Faith, I never saw anythin' loike it in my loife."

"I reckon I'll give the detectives a chase now."

"Will ye? Well, I'll ate me hash if ye ain't the divil himsel'; and how did ye do it?"

"I let go me whiskers, and I put on a good man's clothes."

"And it's a wonderful change. Shure ye

could walk straight into head-quarters wid yer finger to yer nose for all the detectives there are in New York, shure."

"And I'm givin' you credit, O'Shayne."

"Ye are?"

"Yes."

"For what?"

"It was good and cool ye tuk it whin I gave ye the warnin' about O'Conor."

"It wer' testin' yees wer', eh? Well, well, how ye bate a play actor. Shure ye are a magician."

"Well, now, do ye moind, will ye tell me how I'll get to Wall Street?"

"Can ye foind it alone?"

"If it's to go straight east or west I'll foind it, shure."

"Well, it's nayther east nor west ye'll go, but to the south directly. Come here till I show ye."

O'Shayne led our hero outside and directed him to Wall Street; and any one who knows New York well knows it is almost a straight route from the Bowery.

Bardie bid his friend good-morning and started off, and as he walked along he indulged bright hopes. He was inspired by the show of life and activity around him, and he muttered:

"Well, if I don't get as rich as Monte-Cristo in this land of milk and honey, it's me own fault."

Bardie reached Wall Street without much difficulty, but he spent fully two hours on the route. He knew it was early, and he was attracted by the thousand and one sights to be seen by a stranger in New York. In due time, however, he reached the street, and had little difficulty in finding the number to which he had been directed to go. He entered the office and presented the card that had been given to him. The clerk who received the card handed him a large envelope, without asking him a question or exchanging one word; and, as the clerk said nothing, our hero almost maintained silence, and upon receiving the envelope stood a moment, looking rather undecided, when the clerk said:

"That is all."

"Thank you," was the response of our hero, and he left the office; and, once outside, he muttered:

"Well, but that was short and sweet; but I wonder what I have in here?"

Bardie walked along the street for a short distance, moving slowly and thoughtfully. He did not break the envelope; and had gone several squares when a hand was laid upon his shoulder. Our hero turned and recognized the clerk who had given him the envelope.

"You will excuse me," he said, "but I could not speak to you in the office."

"That is what I thought," answered Bardie, with a twinkle in his handsome eyes.

"I thought I'd follow you out and warn you."

"Warn me?"

"Yes."

"Warn me?" repeated Bardie.

"Yes, sir."

"What do you mean?"

"You were a passenger with Mr. Kneiss?"

"I wer'."

"On the raft?"

"Oh, did he tell you about that?"

"He did."

"Well?"

"Mr. Kneiss had a strange suspicion."

"He did?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"He is a fine man."

"He is a quare man."

"You will learn when you open your envelope that he is not an ungrateful man."

"Eh, what's that?"

"You will find he is not an ungrateful man if he is queer; but I came after you to warn you."

"To warn me?"

"Yes."

"Well, let's have it."

Mr. Kneiss thought it possible that you were a fugitive."

"He did, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"He advised you to be an innocent man."

"Well, that is good of him."

"He has been dragged ever since he left the ship."

"Eh, what's that?"

"He has been shadowed."

"And did the shadow fall before or behind him?"

"Behind him."

"Ah! I take it. Yes, yes; I see!"

"There was a strange man in our office this morning. He was making inquiries."

"Yes?"

"But I made up my mind he was a detective."

"A detective?"

"Yes."

"And who was he after?"

"I think he was looking for you."

"Looking for me?"

"Yes."

Bardie thought a moment, and asked:

"Mr. Kneiss made a confidant of you?"

"He did."

"Told you about me?"

"Yes."

"What did he tell you?"

"Only what I have repeated. He believed you were a fugitive."

"And he believed me innocent?"

"Yes."

"And he discovered men following him?"

"Yes, and he thought they were trailing him in order to find you."

"And what is your name?"

"Brush."

"Your name is Brush?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Brush, you are a gentleman. I will remember this warning, and some day I may make a return."

"I feel I have merely done my duty in warning you."

"You need not fear; I will be on me guard, Mr. Brush, and when a detective takes me he will get up very early in the morning."

"You may be too confident, sir."

"I will moind about that, shure."

"But look you!"

"Well?"

The man Brush had given a sudden start, and he was glaring toward a man who was standing upon the opposite side of the street, and in a low tone he warned:

"There is the man who called!"

CHAPTER XV.

BARDIE glanced in the direction indicated, and saw a well-dressed, shrewd faced man seemingly lolling around without any special interest in anything that was going on around him.

"Do not let him see that you are looking at him," whispered the clerk.

"All right; I've had my eye on him; it's all right."

"I'm satisfied he is a detective. He may follow you."

"He will not make anything out of me if he does, but now, do you remember so we'll agree. I shall represent myself as a Scotchman who has been in this country a number of years. I am a broker; do you understand?"

"I do; yes."

"He may come back and question you after I am through with him."

"I see; and I will merely know you as a Scotchman, a broker, with whom I have but a slight acquaintance."

"That's it. I was merely asking you about a certain line of securities."

"I see."

"Well, I'll bid ye good-morning in a formal manner, do ye moind?"

"You must be careful," said the clerk.

"How so?"

"You may betray yourself in your speech. Sometimes you adopt the brogue and sometimes you drop it."

"Yes, I am glad you reminded me; I'll look out for that, and now good-morning."

The two men separated. Our hero wandered on up-town, anxious to return to his friend, O'Shayne, and examine the letter he had received from Mr. Kneiss. Bardie had not gone far when a man stepped beside him, and in an off-hand manner said:

"Good-morning, Mr. O'Conor."

Our hero was cool as a cucumber, and in most excellent English, but with a Scotch accent, said:

"Beg your pardon, sir, you have made a mistake."

The man, who was the detective who had been pointed out to our hero, looked a little disconcerted, but said:

"Is it possible I am mistaken?"

"In one direction you are most assuredly mistaken. I have met you before, but you have made a mistake in the name."

"Oh, you think we have met before?"

"It is possible. I do not recollect having met you, but one thing is certain, you have made a mistake in the name."

Our hero spoke so coolly and in such a natural manner the detective was completely nonplused; but he said:

"You were in the office of — this morning?"

"I just came from there, sir."

"You were to call by appointment?"

"I beg your pardon; my call there was but the thought of a moment. I had some business there and dropped in, sir."

"But did you not receive a package?"

"I did; a circular, a descriptive circular concerning some stocks I am inquiring about."

"I beg your pardon," said the detective, "I see I have made a mistake."

"You are very excusable, sir. Good-morning."

The detective disappeared, and our hero proceeded on his way, muttering:

"Well, I can be thankful that I have a good head, cool nerve, and a level wit, or that fellow would have had me. He certainly had good points on me, and must have been watching down at the banking office, and it is lucky no words were exchanged there."

Bardie did not go straight back to his friend O'Shayne's place, but wandered up Broadway and took a very roundabout course.

As is well known, New York is the best city in the world for a stranger to wander around in without any fear of getting lost, and if a man once gets an idea as to the lay-out of the great town he can go from place to place with perfect ease; and it was not long before our hero found his way to O'Shayne's, and, once there, he sat down to a table and opened his letter. Within the letter was a packet, and upon opening the packet our hero's eyes opened wide, and he called his friend.

"See here," said he.

His friend glanced at the crisp bits of paper taken from the package, and said:

"Where did you get these?"

"From here."

"The letter?"

"Yes. What are they?"

O'Shayne laughed and said, as he ran over the bills:

"It's a fortune."

"A fortune."

"Yes."

"And how much?"

"Five thousand dollars in American money."

These are one thousand dollar bills."

"And can I change them into sovereigns?"

"You can, but ye have no nade for sovereigns in this country. Shure it's now ye can go west."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes."

"Well, do ye moind, I'm not lavin a city where fortunes drop into yer hands, do ye moind?"

"What will you do?"

"I'll make up me mind later on."

"And what does yer letter say? Shure, the man who gave ye the fortune may hev given ye some advice as well. Hev ye read the letter?"

"I've not."

"Read it."

Bardie glanced over the letter, which read as follows:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Inclosed find five thousand dollars. I give it to you willingly and gladly. But for you I would have been food for the fishes. I am well able to present you the money. I've no advice to offer, as I believe you to be a smart as well as a bright and prudent man. But tear up this letter at once, and forget that you ever met me, unless fortune should turn against you, and you should need, at some future time, a friend, whom you will always find in yours, gratefully,

"JOHN KNEISS."

"Well, that's a fine letter," said our hero, handing the missive to O'Shayne.

The latter read the letter, and said:

"Indeed it is a fine letter, and now what will you do?"

"What shall I do?"

"Put the money in a bank."

"And betray mesel'?"

"No, take the name of O'Brien."

"I'll do it, and how will I pay you for the clothes; faith they fit me well, and I'll made no other for the present."

"We can talk that over later on. Come, we'll go to the bank."

The two men went to the bank where O'Shayne knew one of the officers. The deposit was made, and our hero drew some small money for convenience' sake, and after taking a lesson from O'Shayne as to money values he started to visit the home of Mrs. Maguire.

Bardie was quick at "catching on," as the term goes, and he was not slow in asking questions, and when he started for the home of Mrs. Maguire he felt as though he were as much at home in New York as though he had lived in that great city all his life.

Bardie had little difficulty in finding Mrs. Maguire's home, but he was very careful about presenting himself until he had made an examination to see if he had been followed. He was satisfied that sharp men were on his track, and he did not mean to be caught napping. Finally satisfied that all was right he walked up the alley-way and presented himself at Mrs. Maguire's door.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE door was opened by Mrs. Maguire, who did not recognize in the handsome, clean-shaven young man the rather uncouth-looking immigrant who had brought to her care the handsome girl the previous night.

"Good-morning, Mrs. Maguire."

"Good-mornin' to ye, and what is it ye want?"

"Will ye ask me in?"

"Mebbe I will when I know yer business wid me."

"My business is very important."

"Well, stand where ye are and tell me yer business. Shure, ye look loike a sewing-machine man, and may be ye are looking for book subscriptions. Shure, them fellers always hev important business, but I've no toime to bodder wid it if it's on them questions ye are here."

"No, madame, my business is secret and very important."

"It is?"

"Yes."

"Well, come in, but do ye moind, if ye offer a sewing-machine or a book to me I'll just bate ye over the head wid me broom, so I will."

The good woman flung open her door and our hero walked in. The lady whom he had rescued sat in the room looking pale and worried, but the moment our hero entered she arose and approached him, and said, in the sweetest of tones:

"I am glad to welcome you."

"Well, now, I declare!" ejaculated Mrs. Maguire, "this is very fine, and it's very de-satful at that. Did ye not tell me ye had no friends here in America?"

"Do you not recognize this gentleman, Mrs. Maguire?"

"Shure, I do not; I ne'er set eyes on him afore, I'm shure of that."

Our hero was very much pleased. The lady to whom he had performed such a signal service upon two occasions, and who was so charming and beautiful, was the only one who recognized him at a glance. He leaned toward her and said, in a low voice:

"You recognize me?"

"I do."

"It's strange."

"I would know by your eyes, and I can never forget your voice."

Bardie was well pleased, for the unfortunate girl was decidedly beautiful and charming, and our hero had an eye for female beauty.

Turning to Mrs. Maguire he said:

"You need not fear, Mrs. Maguire; no deceit has been practiced upon you."

"I'm not shure about that, shure."

"You have seen me before."

"I hev?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Last night."

"And who the divil are ye?"

"I'm the man who brought this young lady here."

"You are?"

"I am."

"See here; do you take me for a fool because I'm a woman? Look out, now, or I will give ye the broom anyhow, so I will."

"It is the gentleman, Mrs. Maguire."

"And are you entering into the plot ag'in afther I've given ye clothin'?"

"But it's true, Mrs. Maguire."

"It is, eh?"

"Yes."

"And do you mane to tell me you are the man who brought that lady here last night?"

"I am the same man, shure."

Our hero fell to the brogue, and the widow bent her ears and a startled look came to her eyes.

"Ye are?" she said.

"I am."

"Where's yer whiskers?"

"I cut thim off."

"Ye did?"

"Yes."

"And where are the clothes ye wore?"

"It's aisy, shure, to change one's clothes."

"But ye tould me ye had no baggage."

"I found a friend, Mrs. Maguire."

"Ye did?"

"Yes."

"And why did ye cut off yer whiskers?"

"So me frinds would know me and me enemies wouldn't know me."

"Well, there may be logic in that."

"Do ye moind, I knocked over the men who were carrying the girl."

"Yes, and now it comes to me but I do mind yer voice."

"Yes, and I am the same man, Mrs. Maguire."

"And what is yer name?"

"O'Brien."

"It is?"

"Yes."

"And ye are afeerd of the men ye knocked over?"

"I am; they were detectives."

Our hero did not think when he spoke, but he was immediately reminded, as an involuntary cry of distress fell from the lips of the lady. He saw his mistake, and said:

"Ye nade hev no fear."

"Come, now," said Mrs. Maguire, "what do ye mane when ye say they were detectives? Is it into trouble ye will be gettin' me, and I only a lone widow seekin' to earn an honest livin'?"

"No harm shall come to ye, Mrs. Maguire, and whin I explain all to ye and make a proposition ye'll be well satisfied."

"I will?"

"Shurely!"

"How do ye know that, sir?"

"I know you are a very sensible woman."

"Well, well; thank ye for the compliment."

And now, what is your proposition?"

"I must talk the matter over with this lady first."

"Ah! it's a schame yees hev between yees; I see that, sir."

"On my honor, no."

Meantime the fair girl had sat, pale and trembling, with a terrified look upon her face. But it was not the look of a guilty person, by any means, so our hero decided, for he had fixed his eyes upon her several times, and read well her lovely face.

"See here; now, do ye moind," said Mrs. Maguire, "I do not loike this matter at all, an' I'll not let yees get me in trouble. I've a son, an' I'm moindin' his reputation, an' if there is evil between yees, go away. The lady is welcome to the night's shelter; shure I gave it from the goodness o' me heart. But I'm not harborin' thim as the detectives are lookin' for—do yees moind that?"

"Ye shall have a full explanation, Mrs. Maguire."

"I shall?"

"Yes."

Well, the first I want is how ye spake in one moment wid a brogue, and the next wid the most illegant English. Will ye explain that, ef ye plaize?"

"I will."

"Whin?"

"As soon as you have permitted me to hold a few moments' private conversation with this lady."

"Ye would spake to her in private?"

"I would."

"Well, well, I'm goin' to the market; I'll lave yees here, but it's make it all plain to me when I come back ye will, or, faith, out yees go, and ye'll not get me in trouble."

"All shall be explained to you, Mrs. Maguire, and I assure you, on my honor, we are honest people."

"Ye may be, but it looks mighty quare to me, do ye moind? And you will hev to explain

it all or I may turn ag'in yees to save myself. Faith, it's me own boy I'm lukin' for, just remember that, plaize!"

The woman went out, leaving our hero and the lovely girl alone, and for a moment the gazed at each other in silence, but at length Bardie said in a kindly and reassuring voice:

"It is necessary that you should confide fully in me."

"I will," came the answer.

CHAPTER XVII.

"MAY I ask your name?" said Bardie.

"I told you my name on the steamer."

"But have you observed I have never addressed you by that name?"

"I did not observe the fact."

"I never have."

"Why not?"

"It is not your real name."

"How do you know?" she asked, with a smile, evidently for the moment forgetting her trouble.

"I so decided the moment you gave me the name, and I reached the conclusion because of the manner in which you gave it."

"You are very observing."

"I am."

"My real name is Grace Parrish."

"Thank you."

"You are satisfied that is my real name?"

"Yes."

"You recognize it; and now you know how I am at your mercy?"

"I do not."

"You do not recognize the name?"

"I do not."

"And you are from Ireland?"

"You have not read the papers of late?"

"I have not, simply because, like yourself, I am a fugitive."

A moment the girl was silent, and our hero said:

"You need not fear to confide in me. Let me tell you something; I know detectives are on your track."

A shadow passed over the girl's delicate form.

"I repeat you need not fear, for I know further, whatever the charge, you are innocent."

"Oh, thank you for those words, but do you really mean them?"

"I do."

"Have you any intimation of the charge against me?"

"I have not."

"And yet you have decided that I am innocent?"

"Yes."

"Will you explain how you reached that decision?"

"Did I not tell you I was a fugitive?"

"You did."

"I am innocent, and I can readily see how one can be a fugitive and be innocent."

"In your case, ye, but how does your case serve as a parallel to mine?"

"Shall I speak plainly?"

"Yes."

"And you will believe in my sincerity?"

"I will."

"You will not think I flatter you?"

"I can not. I believe you to be a sincere man."

"Then I will say that your face indicates that you are incapable of the commission of a crime."

The girl looked radiantly beautiful as she flashed a grateful look upon our hero. Indeed, at the moment he thought her the most beautiful girl he had ever beheld.

"I am innocent," she said.

"Yes, I know you are."

"And you must know of the crime of which I am accused?"

"No."

"And you never heard my name?"

"I never did."

"I fear your confidence in me will weaken when I tell you of what I am accused."

"You need not fear; I know you are innocent."

"I am accused of being a murderess," said the lovely girl, speaking in a husky voice.

"Murder!" ejaculated our hero.

"Yes, I am looked upon as a murderess, and as a murderess I am being hunted."

There followed a moment's silence once more. Our hero was indeed greatly surprised and also greatly shocked. We will frankly say that he had no idea, no, not for a moment, that the accusation was of such a serious character, but his faith in her was still unshaken, and when

be recovered from the first shock of surprise he

"I still believe in your innocence."

"Thank you."

"And now you must tell me all the circum-

stances."

"I will."

"Proceed, and do not reserve one fact from me, tell me all, and rest assured that I am your friend, and will so prove myself to be, for I can aid you and I will."

"I am the daughter of an English clergyman; my mother died when I was a mere child; I was educated by my father, who died two years ago, leaving but little of this world's goods behind him; I received an appointment, after my father's death, as governess to an heir; his guardian was his brother-in-law; six months ago the lad, who was about six years of age, began to fail in health; he had previously been a robust child; his father had been a wealthy merchant; the bulk of his property was to go to the little son, but in case of his death the whole property went to his sister, the wife of the boy's guardian."

"The cause of the lad's sickness was a mystery; the doctor was baffled and pronounced it a decline; the lad died, and after his death a terrible discovery was made; a *post-mortem* revealed the fact that the lad had been slowly poisoned. I was in the house upon the day the inquest was held. The boy's guardian during the inquest came to me. We were alone; his face was ghastly. I shall never forget its expression. He came to me and seized my hand. He trembled like an aspen leaf, and in a husky voice said:

"The doctors have just made a terrible discovery. Alfred, my little brother-in-law, was murdered."

"I gazed aghast; I had never suspected such a terrible fact; and then, after a moment, and with a wild glare in his eyes, he said:

"Grace, I know you are innocent, but, alas! circumstances point to you as the murderess."

There came a fierce look to our hero's eyes, as he exclaimed:

"The villain; he was himself the assassin."

"Hush!" said Grace, "let me proceed. I declared my innocence, and he said:

"It is needless for you to proclaim your innocence to me; I know you are innocent, but circumstances point to you as the murderess; you must be saved."

"But," I declared, "I am innocent."

"I know that," he repeated; "but you must flee."

"Never!" I cried. "No, no! that would be acknowledging my guilt."

"Listen," he said. "I am on the track of the real assassin. If you will follow my advice you will aid me in proving his guilt; if you do not follow my advice you will be accused, and afterward it will be impossible to trail the real assassin."

"And what would you have me do?" I asked.

"Merely go into concealment for a few days, and all will be well."

"And did you consent?" demanded Bardie.

"I did," came the answer.

"And there you made a fatal mistake," said our hero.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Yes, I did make a fatal mistake," said Grace, continuing her strange narrative.

"The man was seeking to cast suspicion upon you."

"Yes."

"By your flight you aided him."

"I did, but listen. He had always been very kind to me. He was a good-hearted man, and I can see now that his good-heartedness led him into trouble."

"It is not good-heartedness to fix upon an innocent girl a foul crime."

"Let me proceed with my narrative. He gave me money, and, indeed, he had everything arranged for my flight, and I felt very grateful to him, for he made me feel that he was doing me a great kindness and lifting me away from a great peril. He presented to me several facts that were, indeed, unfortunate. The dead boy had been almost entirely under my care, and it did not seem possible that poison could have been administered to him during six months without my knowledge."

"But what motive could you have had?"

"At that time came the most singular part of the boy's father's will, and it was a singular provi-

sion in his will. He knew that his child would be placed under the care of a governess or some other hireling, and he provided that said governess or whoever might be appointed to watch over his child should, at the heir's arrival at the age of sixteen receive one thousand pounds, and in case of the heir's death previous to the age of sixteen the money was to be paid to the governess who should be over him at the time of his death, provided proof of good and gentle treatment of the lad could be produced."

"It was a strange provision."

"It would appear so, but really all the provisions of the bequest were such as to insure for the lad gentle and good treatment, and faithful instruction, and such gentleness and faithfulness in a teacher were to be rewarded. I had been the lad's governess for over two years, and it would be or has been made to appear that I poisoned the boy in order to secure the pension of one thousand pounds, which were to be paid within three months following the little heir's death."

"And who benefited by the boy's death?"

"His sister the most largely, but in case the boy died ten thousand pounds were to go absolutely to his brother-in-law."

"Well, well, it was a will calculated to encourage a fatal illness on the part of the heir, but go on with your story."

"I did flee, and almost immediately detectives were placed upon my track, and the papers were filled with the horror of the murder, and they were conveyed to me, and I read how terrible were the circumstances that pointed to me as the murderess, and had I read the same circumstances as concerned another I certainly should have believed him guilty."

"A month passed, and I was securely guarded against arrest, and there were all manner of rumors connected with my whereabouts; some maintained I had committed suicide, others protested I had fled to France or Italy; but one thing was certain, my flight had fixed the certainty of my guilt in the eyes of the whole community."

"Ah, it was a sad mistake, your flight."

"In one sense, yes, but only in one sense, for, had I not fled, I would have been found guilty and have been executed, and all would have been over."

Our hero stared.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"I mean that, had I not escaped, the evidence was such that I would have surely been convicted; the real murderer, in order to save himself, would have let me go to the gallows."

"You are satisfied the brother-in-law is the real assassin?"

"I am."

"You did not suspect him at first?"

"I did not."

"How did you come to discern that he was the murderer?"

"He came to me at the end of a month, came secretly and in disguise, and he said it was necessary for me to flee from the country. I proposed that I should surrender myself and seek to prove my innocence, but he protested, and finally shocked me by the announcement that he believed in my guilt, but would aid me to escape all the same, believing also that when I committed the crime I was out of my mind, and it was then I first suspected him."

"And did you let him know of your suspicions?"

"I did."

"And did you accuse him?"

"I did not at the first interview, but later on I did. I had come to think the matter over, and many incidents were recalled that convinced me beyond all possible doubt that he was the cold-blooded assassin. He had done for the ten thousand pounds what I had been accused of doing for the one thousand pounds, for I did not know of the provision in the will until after the boy's death; but, you see, I am a helpless girl, and all the plans had been arranged to make it appear that I was the murderess."

"And you did accuse him of the murder?"

"I did."

"And what did he say?"

"He threatened me; he told me I had sacrificed his sympathy; he said he would not betray me, but I must look out for myself."

"Was that the last time you saw him?"

"Yes."

"And how did you escape?"

"I had made up my mind to surrender myself when I had a dream urging me to flee to America. The dream made a deep impression

upon my mind. When I had the same dream three nights successively I determined to flee."

"And you made your escape unaided?"

"I did; I assumed a disguise and fled to Ireland, and from Queenstown I took the steamer for America, and I am now convinced that the course of my flight has been discovered and that I will be captured."

"Never fear for one moment; you shall not be captured, but it does appear that you have been trailed, and that it was a pair of detectives who sought to kidnap you."

"Were they English detectives?"

"I think they were."

"How could they get to this country ahead of me?"

"They must have been in America on some other case, and they were most likely communicated with from the other side; but now, mark my words, it was lucky you escaped and are safe."

"Until you come to believe in my guilt."

"I will never believe in your guilt until you confess it."

"You will some day read the evidence against me."

"And if I do?"

"You will think it convincing."

"Never; your word is better to me than evidence, but now see here. I have a strange tale to tell; there is a singular coincidence in our fates. I am a fugitive."

"Yes, but you are not accused of murder."

"I am accused of murder and detectives are on my track, and there is a reward of two thousand pounds for my capture, and I am as innocent as yourself."

The fair girl gazed in amazement.

CHAPTER XIX.

BARDIE proceeded and related his own strange story, and the girl listened attentively, and when he had concluded, she said:

"How strange that you and I should meet as we have!"

"Yes, it is strange; but now see here, fate and circumstances make us brother and sister. You must trust me, and you must permit me to treat you as though you were my sister indeed."

"I can not consent to any such arrangement."

"You can not consent to any such arrangement?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"In seeking to save me you will but betray yourself."

"Don't let any such idea enter your head; on the contrary, having you to serve me as a cover I can save myself, and at the same time save you. But there is one thing: we can not make a confidante of Mrs. Maguire, good old soul that she is."

"If you will allow me to suggest, I think that we can, and if she can be convinced of my innocence she can aid us both in concealing ourselves."

Bardie thought a moment, and the fair Grace continued:

"If we can secure the co-operation of Mrs. Maguire I will start in with hope, otherwise I shall look for arrest, and indeed there will be no need for me to seek to avoid it."

"Why?"

"I can not stand the strain."

The fair girl dropped another hint that sent an idea whirling through our hero's head, but he said:

"Suppose she should feel it her duty to betray you?"

"We must take that chance. I need not betray to her your secret; I alone will run the risk."

"I do not approve of your plan."

"Leave it to my judgment; I can so manage it that if she does not become our friend, my chances will not be imperiled more than they are at present."

Bardie thought for a long time, and they argued together; and finally our hero consented to leave the matter to the lovely girl's judgment.

Upon Mrs. Maguire's return Bardie took his departure, promising to call again after the dinner-hour.

Relying upon his changed appearance, our hero walked around without any fear of recognition, although there was a reward of ten thousand dollars offered for his apprehension.

Upon leaving the rooms of Mrs. Maguire he walked around to the square where he had made the rescue, determined to take a look at the house into which the detective had sought to

take the girl. He discovered that the house was an English hotel, or rather an English emigrant boarding-house, and as he passed along he saw the man whom he had met in the uptown restaurant the previous night. The man bore the mark upon his cheek, and our hero looked him straight in the face, but the man did not recognize him, and Bardie, as he walked along, muttered:

"Well, I reckon my change in appearance is all right when that fellow does not recognize me."

One fact our hero had established; it was, indeed a pair of English detectives who had sought to kidnap the girl, and, what is more, their act was an illegal one and a clear case of abduction without warrant of law. The men had evidently intended to smuggle the fugitive on an outgoing steamer and return her to England without going through the regular legal requirements.

"I am glad to get on to that fact," muttered Bardie. "It may serve well in case the worst comes to the worst, and I will see those fellows in good time and I will give them a few hints that may be of use to them."

Bardie had really encountered two detectives, and neither of them had recognized him, and he felt greater confidence. He spent three hours walking about the city. He was making himself acquainted with streets and localities, or, as he put it, "he was becoming a Yorker," and he was quite a Yorker when he returned to the home of Mrs. Maguire.

Bardie found Grace awaiting him; but the good mistress of the house was not at home, and a shadow fell over his face.

"Where is Mrs. Maguire?" he asked.

"She has gone out."

"Did you make a confidante of her?"

"I did."

"And she went out immediately afterward, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"You and I must leave at once."

"No, no; I must wait for Mrs. Maguire's return."

"How long has she been gone?"

"About ten minutes."

"That is lucky; we will have time to get away."

"Get away?"

"Yes."

"Why should we get away?"

"She has gone to police head-quarters, you may be sure."

"To betray me?"

"Yes."

"Never; I would risk my life in her hands."

"Have you told her your story?"

"Yes."

"All the facts?"

"Yes."

"And does she believe in your innocence?"

"She does."

"She said so possibly."

"She is a true and faithful woman; we have nothing to fear from her; she will prove a true friend."

"I wish I could feel so."

"Wait until you see her and you will be satisfied."

"If we wait it may be too late."

"For what?"

"Escape."

"We need not fear her."

"It is leaving all to the cast of a die."

"Wait and see her."

Even as Grace spoke Mrs. Maguire entered the room. The woman's face wore an expression of deep concern, and our hero's heart fell. He mistook that look of concern for treachery.

The woman closed her door and looked furtively around, and after a moment, glancing at our hero, said:

"Well, well, did ye ever hear the loikes of the story this young lady tells? Well, well, but it's terrible! Faith, I'm losin' me sines, so I am!" said Mrs. Maguire.

"Look me straight in the face, Mrs. Maguire," said our hero.

The woman fixed her clear, honest eyes on our hero, when the latter asked, in slow, deliberate tones:

"Do you believe in this young lady's innocence?"

"Do I believe in her innocence?"

"Yes."

"I do, as I believe in me own existence at this moment, so I do."

There was no doubting the good woman's sincerity.

Bardie was too well read in human nature to be deceived, and he said:

"You need not have the least fear, Mrs. Maguire; it's all right."

"What is all right?"

"The lady is safe."

"Ah, it's aisy to say so; but shure thim detectives, they're the devil, so they are."

"You need have no fear. We will talk matters over and make our arrangements, and now, my good Mrs. Maguire, you must enter into my service."

"Enter into your service?"

"Yes."

"I can not do that, shure; I must look out for me boy."

"You can look out for your boy, and what is more, you can give him that which will delight your heart, I know."

"And what is that?"

"A good education."

"How can I do that, and I dependint upon me day's wages, goin' out to wash?"

"I will attend to that part of it; so, see here, Mrs. Maguire; I want you to go uptown, and you will find a nice little house, and you'll hire it."

"Hire it?"

"Yes."

"And how will I pay the rint, shure?"

"I will pay the rent, and you shall have money enough to provide you with everything; and you shall send your boy to school, and you shall act as protector to this young lady until such time as her innocence is established, and—"

Bardie came to a halt suddenly. He saw a man advance to the door of Mrs. Maguire's rooms, and he said, in a startled tone:

"Who is that?"

CHAPTER XX.

THERE came a smile to Mrs. Maguire's face as she said:

"Ye nade not fear that man."

"Who is he?"

"My landlord, to be shure! An, faith, he will go away a disappointed man to-day."

"He will?"

"Yes."

"How is that?"

"I've not me rint ready."

"Here, Mrs. Maguire—you are a friend, and you've found friends—pay the man and let him go, and we'll make our arrangements."

Bardie passed over to the good woman money enough to pay her rent, and when she went forth to talk with the owner of the rooms, Grace rose, and approaching our hero, laid her hand upon his arm, and looking up sweetly in his face, said:

"You must not carry out your plans."

"What do you mean?"

"You must not go to all this expense on my account."

"Listen: do not let me hear one word from you from this time forth. You are my sister, you will do as I say; you are under my care and protection."

"But I am not your sister, and I have known you but a few days."

"Fate has made us brother and sister in adversity in the most remarkable manner."

"But you do not know that my story is true; you have no proofs."

"Why, yes; I have proofs."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"What proof have you?"

"The proof is your bonny eyes. Now listen: this protest arises from a sense of pride, but remember the day will come when you can repay me every cent."

"Where will I, a fugitive, ever get money to pay you?"

"Your innocence will soon be established, and then in this land, with your talents and accomplishments, you can earn all the money you need. Now mind, I will keep an account of all I expend on your account, and some day you can pay me back."

"Is that a solemn agreement?"

"It is."

"On those terms I consent."

There was a merry gleam in our hero's eyes when she spoke, and it was her inexperience that led him to feel that, under certain circumstances, the day might come when she could earn enough money to repay him.

Mrs. Maguire dismissed her landlord and returned to the room, when Bardie said:

"Now then, madame, do you understand my

plans? You are to find a nice little house, you are to buy nice furniture for it and make a home for this young lady, and your boy you shall send to school, and he shall become a man of education."

The mother's eyes brightened. It had been the desire of her heart to give her son a good education; but, alas! it was lack of means that compelled her to put him to work instead.

Bardie remained a long time talking over matters with Mrs. Maguire, and finally he took his departure with the understanding that he was to call on the following afternoon to hear her report.

Our hero had made up his mind to turn the detectives on a new scent. He was a very keen fellow and capable of carrying out any scheme that might enter his head.

He returned to his friend O'Shayne, and in the evening went to the theater, and, indeed, set out to learn New York through and through.

When the theater closed Bardie walked uptown and entered the bar-room of a noted hotel, and there he found assembled a great company of men, and he was highly amused and entertained, as everything was strange and novel to him. He took a seat, and soon an elderly man took a seat near him, and still later a young man entered the place, glanced around, and finally advanced and took a seat near the elderly man. The two were soon engaged in an animated conversation.

Bardie was not seeking to overhear what passed, but was compelled to do so or change his seat. Feeling it was just as convenient for the two talkers to change if they did not desire to be overheard he maintained his position, and the result was he fell into the knowledge of a stock-deal.

The two men were brokers, and one was giving the other some sure "points."

Bardie was up a little in stocks. He had played the game for a short season on the French Bourse, and he was not loath to get a "pointer" for Wall Street. He remembered that he had a pretty big contract on hand, and he knew he would require money; his five thousand would not last always, and, besides, if our hero indulged his real tastes, he was quite an extravagant liver. He enjoyed the luxuries of life as well as the next man, as the saying goes, and he was just that age when men love to be reckless and extravagant in their expenditures.

When our hero returned to O'Shayne's place he had made up his mind to risk two thirds of his fortune on a stock deal. He did not betray his intention to his friend, but made up his mind to take the chance.

Bright and early upon the following morning he was up and about; and, as it was too early for Wall Street, he took a long walk over the city, determined to improve every opportunity for making himself acquainted with the great metropolis. His walk took him to the river front, and he spent a long time looking at different objects of interest, until, looking at his watch, he found it time to go to Wall Street.

Bardie proceeded direct to the office of the banking-house where he had received the package from Mr. Kneiss, and he recognized and went direct to the desk of Mr. Brush. The latter turned pale upon seeing our hero, and warned him, by a signal, to speak low. Bardie paid no attention to the warning, but said:

"I've made up my mind to run in a margin on a stock that suits my fancy."

The clerk understood the remark to be a "blind" merely, and said in a whisper:

"The place is under surveillance."

"Is it?"

"Yes; detectives are watching here every hour of the day."

"Well, it's all right."

Our hero spoke in a low tone when the subject of the conversation changed.

"Why did you come here?" demanded the clerk.

"You need have no fear; I am as safe here as anywhere."

"Don't you recognize that if I was guilty I would not come here?"

"I do not understand."

"Didn't the detective come back here after his interview with me?"

"No."

"Then you need have no fear; they're looking for another man."

CHAPTER XXI.

BARDIE went into a full explanation, and made Mr. Brush understand that it was all right.

"What he had certainly thrown the detectives off his track, as far as he was concerned, under his disguise as then assumed, and he again made his statement in relation to the stock."

"So you really wish to invest?"
"I do."
"But you had better hold on to the money you have; Wall Street is a dangerous place. It's win more, or lose what I've got with said Bardie."

"You are a sort of Monte-Cristo?"
"That is what I am exactly."
"If you are bound to risk your money, do not buy the stock you name."

"That is just the stock I wish to put my money in as long as I am spending a dollar that way."

"I can give you a better 'point.'"
"I am taking the 'points' I have; and I wish to risk three thousand dollars."

"Three thousand dollars on one deal!" exclaimed Brush.

"Yes."
"But stock fluctuates; what will you do if you are compelled to 'corner.'"

"It's my way it will come."
"You will lose every dollar of your money."

"That's it; you've named it; it's my money, and I've the right to do with it as I choose."

"You have."
"And that is the direction in which I wish to risk it."

"As you choose, since you are so persistent, but you will be penniless inside of eight-and-forty hours."

"Let her go; it's all right."

Bardie drew a check for the amount and left the office, but not until he had uttered one caution:

"Do you mind," he said, "if you attempt to know more than I do and withhold the purchase for the purpose of showing me where I would have lost you will do so at your own risk. I wish you to make that investment for me, and if you are not willing to do so say so now."

"I am perfectly willing to do as you direct."

"It's all right then."

Two days passed. Mrs. Maguire had found a nice little house far up town, and our hero went with her to view it, and he bid Mrs. Maguire hire it for one year.

"In my own name, shure?"

"Yes."
"But I'll never be able to pay the rent."

"Come with me, Mrs. Maguire."

The two went to a savings bank, and our hero deposited one thousand dollars in the name of Mrs. Maguire, and upon leaving the bank he said:

"There, I think you will be able to pay at least one year's rent."

"Well, well! what does it all mean?" ejaculated Mrs. Maguire. "Sure you're a regular Monte-Cristo."

"I am."

"You are, shure!"

"And what do you know about Monte-Cristo?"

"That wonderful Frenchman?"

"Yes."

"Well, wasn't me son Mike readin' to me all about him? Shure, Mike can read loike a school-master, so he can—and many books has he read to his ould mother, so he has!"

"I reckon Mike is a good son?"

"He is, shure—there's none better!"

"You will say nothing to Miss Grace at present."

"And when will I move into me new house, Misser Monte-Cristo?"

"We will wait a day or two until you have it furnished."

"Ah! and will ye furnish it?"

"I think so."

On the second morning following the deposit of the three thousand dollars Bardie secured the papers early in the morning, and his eyes fell upon the stock reports. He ran down the lists, and an exclamation burst from his lips.

"By all that's strange and wonderful," he exclaimed, "I've got 'em!"

At a reasonable hour our hero proceeded to Wall Street, and was greeted cheerfully by Mr. Brush, the latter exclaiming:

"It's wonderful!"

"Ah, what's that?"

"Your investment has doubled!"

"How is that?"

"Yes, it is one of the most remarkable incidents of the stock, the jump of that stock."

"And you were advising me not to buy it!"

"I did so advise; but where did you get your 'tip'?"

"Never mind now; but will you sell?"

Later in the day Bardie called and received nearly six thousand dollars, and as he started to deposit the check in his bank, he muttered:

"This is a wonderful country. Sure, dollars grow upon the bushes."

Having made his deposit our hero proceeded to the home of Mrs. Maguire. The two went uptown together.

"I've been thinking over about the house," said Bardie.

"Well, have you changed your mind?"

"No; but it's the rent I'm thinking about."

"Shure, that's paid."

"I know; but rent day comes around pretty regularly, you know, and Mrs. Maguire, I'm going to have you buy that house."

"Buy it, shure?"

"Yes."

"How can I buy it?"

"I will give you the money, and you will buy it in your own name; you are a good, honest woman."

"Well, well, it's a Monte-Cristo you are, shure. Faith, I'll expect to hear ye spakin' French next, so I will."

Our hero was a good French scholar, and he rattled off a few words in French, and Mrs. Maguire leaped into the air with astonishment.

"I knew it," she cried, "I knew it!"

"And what is it you knew?"

"Ye are the real Monte-Cristo himself; yes, ye are, shure!"

Ten days passed, and Mrs. Maguire became the owner of the little house, and she had it newly furnished; and, when all was settled for, our hero counted up his balance and saw that he had about fifteen hundred dollars remaining.

"Enough for me," he said, "since I'll make it fifteen thousand before I am three months older in this land of milk and honey and gold dollars."

Mrs. Maguire moved into her new house, and a nice room, nicely furnished and equipped, had been set aside for Grace Parrish.

Strangely enough, our hero had talked but little with the lovely girl following the morning when the mutual explanations occurred between them. But two days after the settlement in the new house our hero called to spend the evening with his friends. He was admitted to the house by Mike, who had been well clad and was an attendant at one of the public schools.

Grace came down to the little parlor to meet Bardie. She closed the door and said:

"I desire an explanation from you, *sir*."

"Is it sir you say to me? No, no; call me Bardie."

"I can not permit you to provide for me in this manner. I shall go forth and earn my own living."

"You will?"

"I will."

"When?"

"At once."

"Hold on, Miss Grace! You will listen to what I have to say before you do anything so foolish."

"You will?"

"I will."

"When?"

"At once."

"Hold on, Miss Grace! You will listen to what I have to say before you do anything so foolish."

"You will?"

"I will."

"When?"

"At once."

"Hold on, Miss Grace! You will listen to what I have to say before you do anything so foolish."

"You will?"

"I will."

"When?"

"At once."

"Hold on, Miss Grace! You will listen to what I have to say before you do anything so foolish."

"You will?"

"I will."

"When?"

"At once."

"Hold on, Miss Grace! You will listen to what I have to say before you do anything so foolish."

"You will?"

"No, no; that man would not turn against me."

"It is certain that he has turned against you, otherwise the detectives would not be upon your track. Now, listen; Mrs. Maguire has betrayed your secret; you have something to live for."

The lovely girl's face assumed a crimson hue.

"Mrs. Maguire has betrayed my secret?"

"Yes; there is one whom you love, one before whose eyes you would like to be vindicated."

The girl's eyes fell, and the crimson blush was succeeded by a deathly pallor.

"It is not necessary for me to say more in that direction. Yes, you have everything to live for; you are young, accomplished, and beloved by an honorable man. You are now under a cloud, but that cloud will be removed. You will be vindicated; the really guilty assassin will some day make a full and complete confession."

"Never."

"Oh, yes, he will; leave that to me."

"But why should you be my friend?"

"Because of all men in the world I am in a better position to sympathize with you. I am a fugitive and I am innocent; I am an orphan, but I have one advantage over you—I am a man. Now listen: you will find a home here with Mrs. Maguire, and you must reconcile yourself to absolute seclusion for some months, and possibly for a year, but in good time you will be vindicated. In the meantime I will search for your uncle. I shall be a wanderer over this broad land; I can not stay in New York. I am assured that the officers are on my track; I am being pursued by a more relentless enemy than you, but I can aid myself, you can not."

"But you are devoting your money to my maintenance."

"Do not speak of that. I have plenty of money; indeed, the want of money I do not know."

"You did not tell me this before."

"But you must know I have plenty of money for I have bought and paid for this house and presented it to Mrs. Maguire. Just see what a benefit your misfortune has been to her. She has a good home and a chance to indulge in the great desire of her heart, the education of her son. Mike is a smart boy. We will hear from him some day. Now not one word from you; here you will abide until the cloud that hovers over you clears away."

"You are a good and noble man."

"Do not mention it; you and I met under the most remarkable circumstances, and there is a wonderful similarity in our fates. It's all right; promise me you will remain here until your good name is cleared or you hear from me."

"You are going away?"

"I am."

"When?"

"Possibly within a week, possibly within a few hours, I do not know. I have told you the detectives I fear are on my track. I do not desire to be captured just yet. The day will come when I shall proclaim myself; the day will come when your innocence will be established. Will you promise to abide here as I have asked?"

"First let me make an explanation to you."

"Proceed."

"Mrs. Maguire you say has revealed my secret?"

"Yes; she did it unintentionally, but it is better that she did—better for you."

"There is a man in England who studied with my father. He is the son of a rich merchant. We were thrown much together, and we learned to love each other; but he dared not reveal the truth to his father, as his parent hopes, because of his great wealth, to gain for his son a wife of high social standing. My affianced corresponded with me up to the time when this terrible charge was made against me. I have not heard a word from him since."

"But he did not have your address."

"Yes; I wrote to him a letter giving him a full explanation. I received no answer. I wrote to him again, revealing my plans."

"You wrote to him revealing your plans?"

"Yes."

"Your plans for flight?"

"Yes."

There came a shadow to the face of the Monte-Cristo, for our hero had taken a fancy to the appellation, and had come to look upon himself as a sort of Irish Monte-Cristo. The shadow was the reflex of a suspicion that had flashed

CHAPTER XXII.

THERE followed a moment's silence, broken at length by our hero, who said:

"Miss Parrish, there is a strange similarity in your fate and mine; indeed, the coincidences are simply marvelous. You are an orphan without a relative in the world."

"It is possible that I have a relative living here in America. My father had an older brother who came to this country many years ago, and for ten years he corresponded with my father; but for twenty years my father had not heard from him. He never received any intimation of his brother's death."

"The chances are that your uncle is dead."

"Yes; but the possibility exists that he still lives, and I have an idea that I will endeavor to find him."

Our hero laughed. He had been long enough in America to form some idea of the vastness of the country, and he knew how useless it was to seek for a person who had been missing for so long a time; but he merely said:

"At present it would not be wise for you to inaugurate a search, for you will remember detectives are on your track. Remember a man who has committed a foul murder has arranged to have you convicted in order to save himself from the penalty of his own crimes."

"The chances are that your uncle is dead."

"Yes; but the possibility exists that he still lives, and I have an idea that I will endeavor to find him."

Our hero laughed. He had been long enough in America to form some idea of the vastness of the country, and he knew how useless it was to seek for a person who had been missing for so long a time; but he merely said:

"At present it would not be wise for you to inaugurate a search, for you will remember detectives are on your track. Remember a man who has committed a foul murder has arranged to have you convicted in order to save himself from the penalty of his own crimes."

"The chances are that your uncle is dead."

"Yes; but the possibility exists that he still lives, and I have an idea that I will endeavor to find him."

Our hero laughed. He had been long enough in America to form some idea of the vastness of the country, and he knew how useless it was to seek for a person who had been missing for so long a time; but he merely said:

"At present it would not be wise for you to inaugurate a search, for you will remember detectives are on your track. Remember a man who has committed a foul murder has arranged to have you convicted in order to save himself from the penalty of his own crimes."

through his active mind. Bardie was a man possessed of a noble disposition, and he said:

"Possibly he did not receive your letters."

"It is possible."

"He really loved you?"

"Yes; I am sure of that; and he taught me to love him, for he loved me first."

The girl spoke with sweet simplicity.

"It's all right, and will come out all right," said Bardie. "I tell you that your innocence will be established; it is only necessary for you to escape arrest for a time and all will be well. You can return to England, only your name will be brighter because of your trials following this false charge against you; and it is possible I may find your uncle. It may be proved after all that you are an heiress."

The Monte-Cristo spoke in a joking tone, little dreaming at the moment how prophetic his words might prove.

"I believe Charles is true to me, and oh, how he must suffer! I would seek once more to communicate with him."

"No; you must not. I demand that you promise not to do so until you have permission from me."

Our hero spoke in tones of great decision.

"You do not think it best?"

"No; if he loves you, this is but a test of his love. He knows that you love him—have sent him a full explanation. You have declared your innocence in the most solemn manner. If he does not believe your story, he does not love you; you do not desire his love."

There came a moment's silence, broken at length by Grace, who said in firm tones:

"It is true."

CHAPTER XXIII.

OUR readers will remember that we intimated that our hero had indulged but little conversation with Grace Parrish, and he had good reasons for his failure in that direction. He possessed a secret, and, incidentally, Mrs. Maguire had made to him a revelation. The good woman in a conversation with Grace had asked if she had no friends, and the girl had told to one of her own sex her love tale, and Mrs. Maguire had, as stated, incidentally repeated the story to our hero, and hence his studied restraint.

Bardie held a more extended conversation with Grace, and made many pointed inquiries concerning her father's family, and especially did he make inquiries concerning the missing brother of her father.

When our hero left the home he had provided for Mrs. Maguire he went to his own lodgings. He had left the residence of his friend O'Shayne and had made a home of his own for reasons. He had hired furnished rooms and had his own housekeeper.

Bardie had intimated that there were reasons why he might be compelled to leave New York, and the fact was that he had a strong intimation that a well-laid plan had been organized to capture him, and his being under constant surveillance and the necessity for constant watchfulness was becoming irksome.

The young man having money in his possession had provided himself with many disguises, and he was a sort of Protean genius. He was fully capable of carrying out his several assumed characters.

Upon reaching his lodgings he set to work to assume a disguise, and he made a transformation that was simply wonderful.

Bardie had traveled much in England, and was well acquainted with men and localities, and he was also well acquainted with the peculiar *patois* of the different counties and towns in England, and besides he was an excellent imitator as well as a splendid linguist. He could speak German like a native, having been educated at a German university, as related in our opening chapters.

Having assumed his disguise he issued forth and proceeded direct to the English immigrant boarding-house, where he had seen the detective who was on the track of Grace Parrish.

He entered the place, going into the bar-room, and sitting down at a table called for a glass of ale, speaking in broken English.

The bar-tender, a regular cockney, was amused at the Dutchman's calling for ale, and said:

"It's beer you want."

"No, I vos vant ale."

"You are a German."

"Ya-a-s."

"German's drink beer."

"I know dot, but I vos lif a long times in England."

"Where did you live in England?"

"When I vos first go to England I went to Lemington, and afterward I vos lif in Birmingham, and den I vos lif in Chester."

The conversation was in progress when the very man our hero had set to "pipe" walked in, and he listened to the conversation; and later on, when our hero took a seat at the table, the English detective took a seat near him, and engaged him in conversation, and he, too, remarked that it was a strange thing to see a German drinking ale. The detective had been in Germany and could speak a little of the language, and he asked Bardie in German what part of Germany he had come from.

Our hero answered promptly, speaking in most excellent German, and, as far as the detective was concerned, the fact was established that he was indeed a genuine Dutchman, and the conversation proceeded.

"You have lived in England?"

"Yes."

"How long did you live in England?"

"Six years."

"How long have you been in this country?"

"Two weeks."

"Only two weeks?"

"Ya-a-s."

"How do you like it here?"

"I vos like it, and I vos like it England."

"Was there any special news in England when you left?"

"Vell, most of der English news is learned here dot vos very wonderful. Der bay der papers in this country to publish der news, but der vos one t'ing vat vos happen in England dot too make me surprised."

"What is that?"

"You vos heard about dot murder?"

Our hero mentioned names and incidents, and the detective was all attention at once.

"Yes, I have heard about that murder. What do you know about it?"

"I vos know dot der detectives in England vos looking up der wrong tree."

"What do you mean?"

"Vell, dot vos shust vot I mean."

"What do you know about the murder?"

"I vos know noddings much, but I vos know somedings."

The detective eyed the speaker sharply, and at that moment his comrade entered the room and took a seat at the same table. The latter had evidently overheard our hero's first remark.

"You know something about it?"

"Ya-a-s."

"What do you know?"

"Shust vot I vos tole you; dey vos looking up der wrong tree."

"How?"

"Dey vos not looking for der real murderer."

"Who is the real murderer?"

"It vos strange dot nobody vos suspect the real murderer."

"And do you know the real murderer?"

"I vos supect him."

"What do you know about the case that leads you to suspect?"

"All I know about der case I vos read in der bapers; dot vos all in one way."

"All you know in one way?"

"Ya-a-s."

"What do you know in another way?"

"I know somedings of dot man Adranfelt."

"You know something of Adranfelt?"

"Ya-a-s."

"He is the brother-in-law of the murdered boy?"

"Ya-a-s."

"And what do you know about him?"

"Vell, I vos know dot oof I vos a detective he vos der man I would follow. Eh, you vos not read der case?"

"Yes, I have read all about it."

"Vell, who vos you t'ought poisoned der boy?"

"The girl, his governess."

"You vos t'ought so, eh?"

"Yes."

"Vell, you vos like everybody else; dey all t'ought so, but dey vos all wrong, I vos t'ink. See, dey vos only search mit der girl, eh? Vy don't dey look up der mans? Now, I vos shust tell you one leetle dings. Dot mans Adranfelt, he vos say noddings until the girl vos get away—he waits a long times, eh?—den all at once he out speaks, eh? Dot vos one leetle t'ing dot vos queer."

Bardie proceeded and basing his theory upon the facts really in his possession, he pointed out

some singular and remarkable circumstances that were certainly very suspicious as concerned the brother-in-law of the murdered lad, and when he had concluded the two detectives sat silent, looking into each other's faces. They had received food for thought.

CHAPTER XXIV.

As related, Bardie presented a remarkable statement of facts, and the two English detectives were very much impressed with what he had said, and we will state that the same day one of them wrote to another detective in London, presenting as his own ideas the theory that had been so ingeniously presented by our hero. In the meantime the conversation had continued, the detectives asking many questions and our hero making important answers.

Bardie at length went forth from the place feeling he had played a good game, and having succeeded so well in one direction he retired to his lodging, and assuming a new disguise started out to interview another detective in a matter which more directly concerned himself. He still held to the character of a German, but affected the appearance of a young German student, and under the cover named he wandered up and down Broadway for the whole day and saw nothing of the detective.

When night came Bardie entered a well-known hotel for his supper, and later on adjourned to the reading-room to indulge in a cigar. But a few moments passed when the very man he most desired to see entered the room, and the next question presented was how should he get into conversation with the officer.

Bardie was reading the paper, and in it there was an account of the rescue of the two men from the raft in mid-ocean, the incident having been revived because of the fact that there had come a report of the rescue of the crew and officers of the ill-fated steamer.

There had been a German student aboard the steamer that had rescued our hero, and Bardie had held several conversations with him and had learned not only his name but his destination, he being determined to go right on to Denver, and it was the same recollection that had suggested to our hero the idea of taking the character of a German, one he was so well fitted to maintain, and again, by speaking in broken German he was able to conceal the inevitable tinge of brogue characteristic of his talk when speaking English.

There was a young man sitting near our hero, and the stranger addressed a remark to Bardie, and then the latter had a chance to refer to the article he had been reading, and he said:

"I was on the vessel that rescued the two men from the raft."

Bardie, as intimated, spoke in broken German, but not as broken as when he had been talking with the other detectives, and the moment he made the announcement of the fact that he had been on the rescuing steamer he observed that the eyes of the detective were fixed upon him.

The officer did not approach him at once, but Bardie knew that the keen-scented human sleuth-hound was on his track, and that sooner or later he would give a signal bark.

The two young men continued in conversation for awhile, and the detective pretended to be reading an afternoon paper, but our hero knew that in fact he was listening to every word that was spoken, and one of the talkers spoke just those words that he desired the listening detective to overhear.

The young man who had been talking with Bardie at length rose and left the room, and our hero commenced reading a paper, when the detective crossed over and took a seat beside him.

"I think I heard you say you were on the steamer that rescued the two men from the raft?"

"Yes, I was a passenger."

"I have been deeply interested in that rescue," said the detective.

"It was a very pleasant day when they were brought aboard."

"Did you have any conversation with them?"

"Yes, with one of them."

"Which one?"

"The Irishman; the older gentleman did not appear inclined to talk to any one."

"You are a German?"

"Yes."

"Have you come to remain in the United States?"

"Yes."

"Will you remain in New York?"

"No, I will go west."
The detective asked our hero a great many questions about Germany and about himself, and finally asked:

"Did the young Irishman make any confession to you?"

"No, he did not make a confession, but he gave me his confidence."

"Then you have seen him since you have been in New York?"

"No, I have not seen him, but I heard from him once."

"You heard from him?"

"Yes."

"What did you hear?"

"He was to call upon me, but sent word that, for reasons I would understand, he would not call, and that he expected to sail the next day for Australia."

The detective moved uneasily in his chair.

"He sent you a note, eh?"

"You seem to be greatly interested in that young man."

"I am."

"Ah, I see," said the pretended young German.

"You see?"

"Yes."

The pretended German had spoken in a very significant tone when he had said "I see."

"What do you see?" demanded the detective.

"You have been following me."

"I have been following you?"

"Yes."

"Why should I follow you?"

"Because I was a passenger on the steamer."

Yes, I see it all; you are a detective."

Our hero had worked matters down just where he wanted to get them. He had played his game well.

"You think I am a detective?"

"Yes."

"And you think I have been following you?"

"Yes."

"Why should I follow you?"

"I told you way, and you came here and spoke to me. I did not seek you. I think I've met you before, and you must have been following me."

"You are mistaken, young man."

"If I am mistaken why do you ask me so many questions?"

"I have a reason, but I never saw you until I came into this room. I did not know you had any knowledge of the matter we have been talking about until I heard you say yourself that you were on that steamer."

"But you seem to take great interest in the incident."

"I do."

"Why?"

"I will tell you later on. Now, answer me. You say you received a note from the young Irishman?"

"No, I did not say I received a note."

"I thought you did."

"I said I had received word from him."

"And what was the word you received?"

"He said he was going to Australia."

"For reasons that you knew?"

"Yes."

"What were those reasons?"

"Reasons that he had confided to me."

"He expected to be arrested," said the detective.

"Ah, I told you that you were an officer."

"Well, I am an officer, and I expect you to tell me all you know about this affair."

CHAPTER XXV.

The pretended student laughed in an amused manner, and said:

"I'd like to know why I must tell you all I know?"

"If you do not I will arrest you."

"You will arrest me?"

"Yes, under our American law I can arrest you for having guilty knowledge of a criminal."

Bardie knew but little concerning our American laws, and believed it possible that the detective told the truth; but as in fact he really desired to make a confidant of the detective, he pretended immediately to be considerably frightened, and he said:

"I am willing to give you all the information in my possession on one condition. I have heard one side of the story."

"You have heard one side of the story?"

"Yes."

"Of what story?"

"The story told me by the young man who was rescued from the raft."

"He told you his story?"

"Yes."

"How did he come to tell you his story?"

"Because I had told him my own."

"Then you have a history?"

"I have."

"What did the young man tell you?"

"He told me first his real name."

"What did he say his real name was, if you please?"

"He said his real name was Bardie O'Connor."

There was considerable significance in the question and answer.

"And what did he tell you about himself?"

Our hero proceeded and told his own history—told the facts even to his meeting with the old woman, and the occasion of his assuming the name of Bardie, and the incidents that followed his visit to his ancestral estates. The detective was an interested listener, and when our hero had concluded the narrative the officer said:

"Quite a romantic story."

"Yes."

"And you believe it?"

"I do."

"And you have not seen him since you arrived in New York?"

"No, sir."

"He sent you a note?"

"No, sir; he merely sent me a scrap of paper."

"By whom?"

"A boy."

"He knew where you were stopping?"

"Where are you stopping?"

Bardie was prepared for the question, and had arranged to answer it. He had taken a room in a lodging-house several nights in succession, under the disguise of the German student, and under an assumed name, and he promptly gave the address.

"You have not heard from him since?"

"No."

"And you really think he has gone to Australia?"

"I do."

"I am much obliged to you, young man; I see this fellow anticipated arrest."

"Certainly; he was a fugitive."

The detective did not say any more to our hero, and after sitting a few moments took his departure.

Bardie had prepared himself, and working a change in his appearance, he followed the detective out, and saw him proceed direct to the address our hero had given.

"Well, well!" muttered the fugitive; "what does that mean? Does he doubt my word, after all?"

Bardie stole into the lodging-house, satisfied he had assumed a change in appearance that would conceal his identity. He saw the detective hold a consultation with the clerk who had charge of the rooms, and he saw him go upstairs to talk with one of the maids. Bardie followed up and got position on the floor above, and leaning over the baluster, overheard every word that passed as the detective and maid held their talk in the hall below him.

"You have charge of room 92?" said the detective.

"I hev, sir."

"Have you ever seen anything of the lodger in that room?"

"I hev, sir."

"See here, my good girl, I see you are smart. I am an officer, and you can be of great service to me. I am after a German who committed a forgery in Germany, and I have reason to believe that the man who lodges in 92 is the man I am after, and if you will give me any valuable information I will give you a five-dollar bill."

"You will?"

"I will."

"And it's a German you're after?"

"Yes."

"Well, you're chasin' the wrong man when you chase the lodger."

"I am?" exclaimed the detective, in a surprised tone.

"You are."

"How do you know?"

"I know well enough."

"But how do you know?"

"I'll tell you; the lodger is no German."

"He is no German?"

"No, sir."

"How do you know?"

"He is a Scotchman."

"A Scotchman?"

"Yes."

"I reckon I have not got the right room."

"Yes, ye hev, if ye mean Mr. Gustav Indig for that man lodges in 92."

"But you say he is not a German."

"And nayther is he, sir; he is a Scotchman, I could ye."

"How do you know?"

"Faith I've heard him talkin' to himself in his room, and I heard him singing a Scotch tune one mornin', and besides that he is in disguise, for I've seen him wit' his wig off, so I have, and he may be a scamp and a forger, but he is no German."

The detective uttered a peculiar exclamation, and said:

"You are sure?"

"Av coorse I am sure."

"I'm much obliged."

The detective started to go away when the girl called:

"Ye have forgot, sir."

"What?"

"The five dollars."

There came a shadow to the detective's face, and it crossed his mind that after all the girl was deceiving him, and had told the story for the money.

"I would give you the money, but I've no proof that your story is true."

"I'd hev no rasin to tell ye a lie; no, sir, what I told ye is true."

"You will solemnly swear it is true?"

"I niver swear, but, on my honor, it is true, ivery word of it."

"And why did you not report the circumstances in the office?"

"I did."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"To whom?"

"The night watchman."

"You told him just what you have told me?"

"I did."

"Here is your money, my girl."

The detective paid the five dollars and proceeded down-stairs, and our hero from above-stairs muttered:

"I am in good and bad luck—in good luck in having learned of my danger, but in bad luck in being thus hounded. Hang the girl! She has taught me a lesson, however, and I will know how to act in the future; but one thing is certain, that fellow means to capture me at all hazards."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE detective went down-stairs and asked for the watchman, but learned the man did not go on duty until night.

Bardie watched until he saw the officer go away, when he descended and stole out of the house. Matters had assumed a very serious aspect, and he made up his mind to leave New York. He came to the conclusion with a great deal of regret, but the circumstances were such that no other alternative remained to him.

Our hero spent the evening at the home of Mrs. Maguire, and he announced the fact that it was necessary for him to leave New York.

"Are you really determined to go?" asked Grace.

"I am really determined to go, and now I've advice to give you. Do not write to a living soul; do not make any attempt to discover your uncle, but remain in seclusion for a year if necessary, and watch the papers daily, and some day you may read good news."

"Will you explain?"

"I will. I have had an interview with the detectives who are on your track. I have certainly diverted them from pursuit at present. I know the officers are here on another affair, and they will not waste any time searching for you at present, and if you just 'lay low' where you are you will be all right."

"And why can not you do the same?"

"My case is very different; I have a relentless enemy pursuing me, and the officers have got on my track; they have a greater incentive than the advertised reward. I know if I remained I would be discovered, and before I'd wear a prison garb and stand trial I'd kill myself. No, I must go."

There came a sad look to the face of Grace, and in plaintive tones she said:

"If you go away I will be alone and friendless in New York."

"Will ye?" exclaimed Mrs. Maguire.

"Faith, ye are very complimentary to me."

"I do not mean, Mrs. Maguire, just as it sounds, but you can not advise me as my dear friend can advise."

"Well, he has given ye advice to last you for a year."

"I have nothing to live for," muttered the girl.

"You forget Charles," said our hero.

A blush mantled the girl's face.

"Yes," she said, "that is true."

"Remember, Miss Parrish," said our hero, further, "I am fully satisfied your innocence will be established, and the day will come when you can return to England, and, to tell you the truth, I do not believe the day is far removed. Will you act according to my advice?"

"I will; but we may meet again some day."

"It is possible; but it will be many years from now, most likely."

"Why so?"

"I am satisfied I will be hounded all over the earth; I am satisfied I will be traced from place to place."

"But your innocence will be established some day."

"It may, and it may not; I can not tell. One thing is certain: I will have no rest as long as my enemy lives, unless—"

The young man stopped short.

"Unless what?" asked the fair girl.

"I can not tell you now."

"Will you leave me some remembrance of you—some mark which will serve as an identification of each other should it so happen that we do not meet until after many years?"

"You have a ring upon your finger."

The girl removed it instantly.

"It is the old, old trick," said Bardie; "but we will adopt it," and between his powerful fingers he split the ring in half.

"There," he said; "you take one, I will keep the other."

"I shall never forget you!"

"Thank you."

"And some day I may wish to communicate with you."

"Well?"

"On the first day of every year I will put my address in the 'Personal' column of the New York Herald."

"A good scheme," said Bardie.

"And how about your address?"

"It may not be convenient for me to do so, but if circumstances permit I will communicate with you."

Little did either of these two realize at the moment what a really delightful reward was to be the outcome of the arrangements they were making at that moment, and neither realized the grand fortunes that awaited them both, nor did one realize the wonderful adventures through which he was to pass, and one of them was to occur that very night.

The conversation between them was prolonged. The fair girl did not seem to be willing for Bardie to go away, and she looked so lovely and seemed so loving the young man was not at all anxious to depart, and despite the fact that he had schooled his feelings, he could not prevent the mental exclamation, "Hang that rascal, Charles!"

At length Bardie was compelled to depart, and when he rose to go the fair girl said:

"I will see you once again before you leave New York?"

"Yes, I will see you once again, if possible, but, remember, you are to obey my instructions whether we meet or not."

"I will obey your instructions to the letter."

"I believe a few months will see your innocence established, and then—"

"Well?"

"You can return to England and Charles."

The young man did not wait to say another word, nor did he permit Grace to make a reply. He rushed from the house and proceeded toward his lodgings.

One can not go through a large city without meeting with objects of charity, and Bardie had proceeded but a short distance when a woman accosted him.

"Will you aid me?" she asked.

She did not make a long and piteous appeal, as is usual with beggars, but spoke but the few words, "Will you aid me?" The appeal coming in such an unusual manner, our hero heeded it, and, stopping, asked:

"Are you in trouble, my good woman?"

"Yes, I am in great trouble."

"What is your trouble?"

"I am the wife of a mechanic—he has been sick many months; we owe rent; I have not one

cent. I have no money to buy them bread. If the rent is not paid to-morrow, or at least a part of it we will be turned into the street."

"What you tell me is the truth, my good woman?"

"It is the truth, sir, as sure as we two stand face to face, and as sure as some day we will stand before the Judgment seat."

Bardie drew from his pocket a roll of bills, saying:

"Here, my good woman, take it; you are welcome to it."

The woman took the money, and Bardie walked away. He had gone but a few squares when a voice called to him:

"Look out; you are being tracked!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

BARDIE was taken aback, but was perfectly cool as he glanced around and saw the woman whom he had just aided standing in a doorway. How she had got around ahead of him he did not know, but he was quick, and said:

"I will walk slow. Manage to get ahead of me. Keep walking, and tell me what you mean, so no one will know you are talking to me."

Our hero, while speaking, kept walking along, and his utterance was rapid.

A few moments later a woman crossed from an opposite corner and passed on ahead of him, and as she walked she managed to say:

"I started to follow you when I saw that some one else was on your track. I desired to thank you, but when I saw that some one else was following I laid back and watched and made sure. It is possibly a thief who saw you give me money, and who means to rob you. I ran around and got ahead of you to warn you."

"It is all right," said Bardie. "I am much obliged, but I can take care of myself. Now, you go on to your home and relieve your family. You are welcome to what I have given you."

The woman kept on to the corner, and then disappeared down a cross-street.

Bardie knew well enough it was no thief. He made up his mind that a detective was on his track, and he determined to throw him off if possible.

The fugitive kept walking straight ahead for several squares, and then he made a sudden turn and caught sight of his pursuer, and so the chase continued for fully half an hour, when Bardie concluded he had thrown the man off his track, and he started for his home, muttering:

"I must get away at once, they are closing in on me, and at any moment I may be arrested." The young man reached his lodgings at length, and when in his room sat down to think over the situation. He did not disrobe and retire, although it was very late. Probably half an hour passed when he threw himself upon the bed, but had hardly closed his eyes when the door of his room opened and a man entered. Our hero recognized the man at a glance, although the latter was evidently disguised. He entered and closed the door behind him. Bardie leaped up in bed and demanded:

"Who are you and what do you want here?"

"How dare you enter my room?"

"Take it easy, young man; I want to have a talk with you."

As the officer spoke he displayed a cocked revolver, thereby intimating that he was prepared for any emergency.

Bardie had locked his door but divined that the detective had opened it with a skeleton key.

"You have come to rob me, eh?" said our hero.

"No, I have not come to rob you."

"Who are you?"

"Never mind; I want to talk with you."

"I will give an alarm."

"Do so if you choose; but there are reasons why you should not."

The visitor put special emphasis on the word "you."

"Will you explain your business?"

"That's what I am here for, young man."

"Do it quickly. This intrusion into my room is an outrage, or else you are here to steal, thinking I was asleep."

"Your name is Bardie O'Connor."

"Is it?"

"Is it not?"

"You appear to know."

"I am an officer."

"Oh, you are?"

"Yes."

"Well, what do you want here?"

"I want Bardie O'Connor."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"You have come to the wrong place for the man you name."

"You deny your identity?"

"I deny nothing. Your impertinence does not entitle you to a denial."

"All right; but listen to me: I propose to arrest you."

"Arrest me?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"You know well enough; but you can tell me your story and I will consider it."

"Oh, you are very kind, but I have nothing to tell you."

"Will you go with me quietly?"

"Go where?"

"To head-quarters."

"It is tough to be led out at midnight."

"But you do not want to make a row?"

"No."

"And you will go quietly?"

"I will if you will give me any good reason why I should go."

"You are accused of murder."

"I am?"

"You are."

"Who is my accuser?"

"You know well enough; it is no use for you to deny your identity. I have you down fine."

"And you want me to go with you?"

"Yes."

"As a prisoner?"

"Yes."

"See here, I will admit I am Bardie O'Connor."

"You admit your identity?"

"Yes."

"And you were the young German who talked with me at the New York hotel?"

"Was I?"

"You were."

Bardie laughed, and said:

"Do I look like a German?"

"No; but you are a very smart man."

"And you want me to go with you?"

"You must."

"But I may fight."

The officer showed his weapon, and said:

"Make one move and you are a dead man. I will take you dead or alive."

"This is hard on students."

"You're a student, eh?"

"Yes."

"See here, I will give you a point. I do not desire to be hard on you. I do not think you can be returned to Ireland—not if you get a good lawyer; but I must do my duty."

"I am an innocent man."

"It is possible you are, but you must go with me all the same."

"I will, on one or two conditions."

"You will go anyhow."

"I will go quietly on one or two conditions."

"You will go quietly?"

"Yes."

"What are your conditions?"

"The first one is that you tell me how you came to get on my track."

"There is a man over here from Ireland."

"There is?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

"I like you, young fellow, and I will tell you all the facts. The man calls himself Manning, but I do not believe that is his name, but he has the amount of the reward with him now. You are my prisoner, but I tell you I do not think they can take you back to Ireland. I must arrest you all the same."

"Then I suppose I might as well surrender," said Bardie.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THERE came a smile to the detective's face, and in a kindly voice he said:

"I am sorry for you, young fellow; yes, I am; but I am compelled to do my duty."

"You are? All right; but you will allow me to arrange a few things before you take me away?"

"No, I can't do that."

"You will take me right off?"

"I must."

"This is hard. I will have no chance to return here. I will be clapped in jail at once."

"I can't help it. I'm sorry for you, but I must do my duty."

"But you can give a fellow a chance."

"I can not give you any more chances than I have already."

"You say there is a man here from Ireland?"

"Yes."

"What sort of a looking man?"

The detective described the man.

"Where does he hang out?"

The detective was so sure of his game he was very communicative, and named the hotel.

"Do you get the full reward?"

"I am entitled to it."

"After you receive the money will you act as my friend?"

"That depends. I can not promise."

"Ah, I see; if the man from Ireland offers you money you must turn against me."

"That is business, you know."

"All right; I can not help it; I will go with you."

"But I must put the 'dardies' on you."

"Handcuffs?"

"Yes."

"Why this indignity, if I am willing to go along with you?"

"It's business."

"Well, it's your day; mine will come."

"You must not have any hard feelings against me, young fellow; I am only doing my duty."

"But there is no need to put the irons on me."

"I must do my duty; up with your hands."

Bardie extended his hands, and the detective, having drawn a pair of dardies from his pocket, was about to adjust them, being thrown completely off his guard, when our hero suddenly leaped forward. He seized his would-be captor by the throat and held him so the officer could not move or make the least outcry, and he fell back momentarily unconscious, when Bardie quickly clapped a handkerchief to his mouth and nostrils.

We will here state that our hero had prepared himself for all contingencies. He had determined under no circumstances to surrender. He had devised many precautions to aid himself in time of need, and among his other little plans was the possession of chloroform ready for use, and it was with the latter that he fixed the detective, and having thus fixed his man he gagged him and put his own dardies on him and tossed him on the bed, when he bound his feet and had him as helpless as a babe.

In a few moments the detective recovered from the effects of the anesthetic, and glancing wildly around, he lay with eyes fairly starting from their sockets.

"You thought you had me," said our hero, "but now I've got you; and do you mind, I'm going to take the gag out of your mouth, but if you make the least attempt to give an alarm I'll drive this clear through you!"

Bardie shook a dangerous-looking knife before his prisoner's eyes.

"Will you be quiet?"

The detective moved his head affirmatively.

"Do you mind, it's life or death with me. If I settle you I am free; no other man is on my track."

The detective again nodded his head affirmatively.

"As sure as you live, now, you will be a dead man if you give an alarm! You can well understand my position."

Again the detective nodded his head affirmatively, and our hero removed the gag from his mouth, and it was some minutes before the detective could speak, his jaws had been so widely stretched; but when he could speak, he said:

"You've got the best of me."

"Yes, I have; and now, see here; must I do the right thing to settle your case?"

"You would not murder me in cold blood?"

"It's business, I think."

"No, no."

"I must do my duty."

"Is it your duty to murder me?"

"My duty to myself. I mean it's life or death with me. I am charged with murder!"

"But you claim you are innocent."

"I am innocent, but they may prove me guilty for all that. I have a bitter enemy."

"But you will get justice here in New York."

"I will?"

"Yes."

"My friend, I can ease myself a great deal of trouble by just waiting your case. And now the question is, how will you die. Do you want to take a chance and die easily, or shall I do the job?"

"Are you determined to kill me?"

"It's business."

"All right, I'm in your power; I can not do

anything. I will not beg further for my life. I took the chances when I went for you."

Our hero laughed, and said:

"You know I would not harm a hair of your head, but I will let you sleep in my bed until morning, when some one may call and let you out."

"Don't do that?"

"I must."

"Listen: let me go and I will agree not to arrest you. I will haul off the job."

"You will."

"I will."

"I'd like to take your word for that, but I dare not; but do you mind, I am an innocent man."

"I believe you."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"And if I let you go what will you do?"

"I can not promise exactly."

"You can not promise exactly?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I am an officer. I am acting under orders."

"But you said you would not arrest me if I let you go."

"I meant I would not arrest you now, and I would give you a chance to get away."

"No thanks to you. I have that chance. I can go at my leisure."

"I will give you a good day's start."

"And then you will start after me again?"

"I may be ordered to do so."

"I do not need the start. I will have time enough before you are discovered. And now, see here, I am about to pack. If you remain perfectly quiet I will not return the gag to your mouth at once."

"It may be my duty to give an alarm."

"Eh?"

"It may be my duty to give an alarm."

"Oh, that's it, eh? Well then, mister, I will see that you do not give an alarm. How is this?"

CHAPTER XXIX.

BARDIE returned the gag to the man's mouth, and then coolly set to work to pack up such goods as he could carry with him. Our hero was prepared always for an arrest, and he had made his arrangements accordingly. He had secured several lodging-places, and he had his goods well scattered—in fact, was in "light marching order" all the time—and it did not take him long to get ready for a start, and when ready to go he said to the officer, who could hear, but could not speak in return:

"I'd like to let you know my route, mister; but I shall have to waive that little mark of politeness upon this occasion and let you find my new address; but one thing please remember: I am an innocent man. I am fleeing for my life, and arrest by you means death to me. If I were a murderer I would settle your case now. I could kill you, and the doctors would never know how you met your death. I learned the secret from an old German doctor. Although practically you seek my life, I will spare yours; but should you ever get upon my track again, remember this, as I tell you, for the time may come when, in order to save myself, I will be really compelled to down you."

Bardie spoke calmly, but his utterance was rapid and his tones decisive.

The detective indicated with his eyes that he wished to speak, and our hero removed the gag and again waited for the man to get his jaws in working order, and when he succeeded the officer said:

"I do not blame you; I got the worst of it, and it is my own fault. I should have been better prepared, and one thing I will say, I believe in your innocence, and I think the best thing for you to do is to surrender yourself and get a legal release. I will aid you to prove your innocence. Your return to Ireland on the charge of murder can be prevented."

"You are very kind, but I know something of law. You may be right, but I do not wish to spend months and possibly years in prison while the matter is being legally decided. I shall leave America, I reckon, and take my chances in some other land."

"I tell you what to do, as you are really decided, go to Mexico."

"And send you my address when I get there?"

"I will never follow you to Mexico, nor will any other American detective, unless employed by private contract."

"Well, my friend, have you anything more to say?"

"No."

"I am sorry to be compelled to gag so nice a talker, but self-protection is an imperative law."

Bardie again clapped the gag in the man's mouth, and said:

"Good-night."

Bardie passed out into the night, and we will say that he felt very sad and uncomfortable. It is no pleasant thing to be hunted and hounded as he was. He knew that he must leave New York, but he had a balance in the bank, and it was necessary for him to draw his money before he left.

Our hero proceeded to the home of his friend O'Shayne, and fortunately met his friend at his own door, the latter having been out and but just returned.

"Well, well," cried O'Shayne, "is that you?"

"Yes."

"And what brings you around at this hour?"

"I have been corralled, and was compelled to 'fit.'"

Bardie proceeded and told his story.

"And you have left the detective bound in his own fetters?"

"I have."

"Ye are a wonderful man, Bardie dear; and now, what will you do?"

"It's no use. I must leave New York."

"And where will you go?"

"I've not made up my mind; but it's go I must, and go I will, after you have got my money from the bank to-morrow."

Upon the day following the incidents we have described, our hero received all his money from the bank, received it in gold, and waiting until night, he started for the home of Mrs. Maguire.

He was met in the parlor by Grace, to whom he revealed the fact of his immediate departure.

The fair girl betrayed considerable agitation, although our hero had prepared her for his going, and he did not understand it. It is said that in some things the brightest men are fools, and those things are the heart-phases of women.

Bardie knew that Grace Parrish loved or had confessed to a previous love. He had accepted the statement as true, and his faith in woman was such that he believed a woman could love but once. We do not desire to intimate that Grace was in love with our hero, but we merely wish to indicate that he did not attempt to investigate her agitation at the announcement of his departure.

Bardie held a long talk with Grace and discussed matters which will be duly recorded as our narrative progresses, and having completed all his other arrangements, there was nothing for him to do but start upon his journey, which we will indicate had a most wonderful termination.

Bardie had adopted a good disguise and considered himself perfectly safe, even though his old antagonist might run upon his track. He was got up as an old man, and his disguise was not only a good one, but he was well able to sustain the rôle he had assumed.

Our hero was always on the alert, and when he reached the waiting-room of the Grand Central Station his eyes went wandering around to learn the character of his fellow-travelers. He was to take a midnight train, but for reasons had sought the station fully an hour ahead of time. He had been in the station but a few moments when an ejaculation fell from his lips—a suppressed exclamation, but one very expressive. His glance had fallen several times upon a sharp-faced man, and he soon fell to the conclusion that the sharp-faced man was a detective and was there to shadow a fugitive, and our hero knowing of no other fugitive but himself, decided that the man was on his trail.

Bardie had watched the papers and had seen nothing concerning his adventure with the detective on the previous night, and he made up his mind that his victim had managed to suppress the particulars of the really ludicrous affair.

It was an awkward discovery he had made. He had hoped to get away without having his probable course suspected. He did not wish to be compelled to leave America entirely. He had determined to go, and had hoped to throw all his enemies off his track; but the discovery he had made was very discouraging.

It was not long before he made another annoying discovery. He discovered that he had become the subject of the special attention of the detective, and while watching he saw the officer hold a momentary conversation with a comrade.

"By all that's unfortunate," muttered Bardie, "I am greatly harassed! There are two of them, and they have their eyes on me."

Our hero did not move or betray any trepidation; he even fixed his eyes several times directly on the officer, and he was as cool as a cucumber when he saw the detective approaching him, and muttered:

"Well, well! Now the trial begins, but I am ready."

CHAPTER XXX.

BARDIE had discerned correctly. The detective approached him, and asked:

"What time does the train go?"

The fugitive put his hand to his ear with the characteristic look of helplessness of a deaf man, and asked in return:

"What did you say?"

"What time does the train go?"

The old man rose and put his face close to the lips of the detective, and with his hand still to his ear, and repeated:

"What did you say?"

"What time does the train go?"

"Which train?" demanded the pretended old man.

"The train we take."

"What train do you take?"

"The twelve o'clock train," came the answer.

"That is the train I take," said the old man.

"Where do you go?"

"Eh?"

"Where do you go?"

"Albany."

"Do you live there?"

"No."

"Where do you live?"

"Albany."

The last answer was a cunning one. It was really an indication of genuine deafness, and a very characteristic one. The pretended old man had just answered he did not live in Albany, and when asked where he did live, answered, "Albany."

"You live in Albany?"

"No."

"Where do you live?" came the question.

"Eh?"

"Where do you live?"

"With my son."

"Where does your son live?"

"In Albany."

"Whereabouts in Albany?"

"Eh?"

"Whereabouts does your son live in Albany?"

"Eh?"

The question was repeated and the answer came:

"You know my son, eh? What is your name?"

"I asked you whereabouts your son lives in Albany?"

"Yes; I will tell him I met you if you tell me your name."

At this moment a man came and spoke to the detective, and asked:

"What are you at?"

"I'm talking to this beggar."

"What for?"

"I thought he had a suspicious look."

The second man said to our hero:

"Halloo!"

The old man looked with a surprised expression upon his face, and put his hand to his ear before.

"He is deaf," said Detective Number two.

"I should say he was."

"He may be playing it," said number two, in a low tone.

There came no change to our hero's face.

"I think we had better arrest him," said detective number two.

The old man maintained the same impassive look.

"Is he really deaf?" asked number two.

"To the best of my judgment he is."

"But he's our man all the same."

The pretended old man still maintained the stated look of indifference. He had played his part well, and the detectives were really bothered, but, evidently, were both convinced that he really was deaf, and then they made certain statements that were a really startling revelation to our hero.

From words exchanged between the two officers he felt to the fact that he was not the man whom they were really shadowing. They were after another party entirely, and when Bardie was assured of this fact he felt greatly encouraged.

He later on heard one of the officers say:

"I'm sure our man will take this train."

"There is but one thing for us to do."

"What is that?"

"Go on the train. He will not show up until the last moment."

"As you say, we had better go on the train."

During the whole of the above scene there had sat alongside of our hero a clerical-looking gentleman, and the latter must have heard every word that was spoken.

Bardie waited a few moments, and then walked into the restaurant near the station, and when he sat down he ordered a sandwich, and in an ordinary tone the waiter asked:

"What kind, sir?" and our hero promptly responded:

"A corned-beef sandwich, please," and as he spoke he looked up and saw the clerical-looking gentleman standing over his shoulder, and the latter asked:

"Do they keep good, fresh sandwiches here?"

Bardie let his hand go to his ear, and the stranger leaned over and whispered:

"You can't play that on me."

Bardie was perfectly cool and assumed the old look of helplessness, when the stranger said:

"It won't do, old man."

Bardie said:

"Speak louder, sir."

"It won't do, old man. The waiter didn't speak loud, and you heard him well enough."

A cold chill ran through our hero's frame. He felt that he had not been sufficiently cautious, that he had betrayed himself; but he did not mean to surrender so easily, and he still attempted to play the deaf dodge, when, to his great wonderment, the stranger whispered:

"It is not you the cops are after."

Bardie was in a quandary. He did not know just how to act. The clerical-looking man was not one of the two detectives who had spoken to him, but he might be a third one, and it might all be part of a game; and he still maintained his seeming deafness, when the stranger repeated:

"They are not after you. I heard all they said to you, and you played your game well. Now, see here; I won't give you away. I could go and tell them you are not deaf, but I won't; and do you know why?"

"Speak louder," said our hero.

The man whispered:

"I can not speak louder or the waiter will get on to both of us."

The situation was a strange one, and one fact was certain, the clerical-looking gentleman was anything but a clergyman.

Bardie determined to take the chance, and he said, as he shook his head:

"What do you mean?"

"Ah, you hear me?"

"Yes."

"They are not after you."

"Who are they after?" asked Bardie.

"They are after me."

Bardie was really astonished but still not fully assured, and he said:

"Look here, my friend, if you are playing a game on me I've something to tell you."

"Go ahead."

"You are a dead man. I am not to be taken."

"You need not fear me; you have been unwittingly my best cover."

"Are the cops after you?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"We can play them and both escape."

"How?"

"Listen and I will tell you," came the answer.

CHAPTER XXXI.

BARDIE was not altogether satisfied; but he was really in for it, and was bound to take his chances. The stranger glanced around, and then, still speaking in a whisper, said:

"I will go on the train first. I will secure a seat. You watch me, and come and take a seat alongside of me. Then I will talk to you. Of course you will be deaf as a post, and I will speak loud. I will ask you questions. I will tell you who I am and you will recognize me, and we will shake hands, and then talk."

It was a good scheme the man had proposed, but our hero was silent and thoughtful, and the man said:

"It is a good scheme for both of us; we will both get under the same cloak, you see."

"Are the police after you?"

"Yes."

"For what?"

"To arrest me, of course."

"And you are under a disguise?"

"Yes."

"Those two officers are searching for you then?"

"Yes."

"You admit that?"

"Yes."

"What makes you think I am a criminal?"

"I don't say you are a criminal. The police sometimes run down innocent men."

Our hero did not like the last remark. It sounded as though the speaker had given away something.

"Are you an innocent man?" he asked.

"We have not got time to discuss that now; the train starts in fifteen minutes. Did you understand my proposition?"

"I did; but why should I identify myself with you?"

"I'll tell you; if you are a man with any heart you will aid a wronged man."

"I will."

"Yes?"

"You are a wronged man?"

"I am."

"And you admit those officers are after you?"

"I do; and I know you are a fugitive."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"How do you know it?"

"Simply because I know you are under a disguise. Men do not go under cover unless they have good reason for so doing."

"You think I am under cover?"

"I know it; and now see here, I've no design against you; I've got a clean give away on you, and if I were in a scheme against you all I'd have to do would be to open my mouth. I tell you I'm all right as far as you are concerned, and I'll tell you more, those detectives are not altogether off your track, but if you go in on this scheme with me we can throw them off your track, and we will both be all right."

"Will you tell me why they are after you?"

"I will when we reach Albany."

"Are you an honest man?"

"I am, I swear I am, and I am being wrongfully hunted and hounded."

Our hero knew well that it was indeed a possible thing for an innocent man to be hounded and hunted. He himself was innocent, and yet he had been pursued every step he took.

"I told you one thing; if you are really in a game to betray me I will have your life."

"You need not fear betrayal from me."

"Your game is that you go into the car, and I take a seat beside you?"

"Yes."

"You are to talk to me?"

"Yes; and you are to play your deaf game; you play it well, and in good time we will find out that we are acquainted, and you will recognize me as the man I shall claim to be. I tell you the scheme will save us both."

"You appear to take it for granted that I am dodging the police?"

"I know it."

"But you admit, also, that I am not the man these fellows are after?"

"I do."

"They are after you?"

"Yes."

"Would it not be better for me to look out for myself?"

"If you think so, after all I have said—yes, but you may find out you have made a mistake."

"How?"

"Those men still have a suspicion as concerns you."

"They have?"

"Yes."

"How do you know that?"

"You will see, if they do not fall to my disguise. They will follow you up, and at a moment when you least expect, off goes your wig, on go the darbies, and if you are not the man they are after they will find out who you are anyhow."

Bardie could see that there was really some truth in what the man said, still the question arose: Was the man playing a game, after all?

"I will trust you," said Bardie.

"You are wise."

"Again I tell you, however, that it will go very hard with you if you seek to play a trick on me."

"If we both escape and you hear my story, you will be glad you aided me. I do not know who you are; I do not know why you are here."

my to disguise, but one thing I know: whoever you see you will be glad you aided me to escape when you hear my narrative."

The conversation between the two men had passed rapidly on while both were eating, and finally our hero said:

"I am with you. I will take the chance."

"You will never regret it. And now I will return to the station. You come a few moments later, and do not notice me or speak to me until we are seated side by side in the train; and then let me open the conversation, and I can trust you to play your part well. But remember, you must stick to the deafness as a good dodge."

"All right; and you will please remember all I have said."

"I will."

The stranger returned to the depot, and looked as demure as could be, and a moment after his return one of the detectives approached him.

"You were talking to the old man over in the restaurant?"

"I was trying to talk to him."

"Trying to talk to him?"

"Yes, but he is so deaf. I do not see how he gets along. I think it is dangerous for him to travel alone."

The detective walked away, and to the clerical-looking man two facts were established on top of the confession he had made to our hero. He had not been recognized, was not under suspicion, and the pretended deaf man was still under suspicion, and the former fact explained why the detectives had not entered the restaurant. Having no suspicion of the pretended clergyman, they hoped to get what information they needed from him, as had they been seen in the saloon the deaf man, if really a criminal, would have been on his guard.

A few moments passed, and our hero entered the saloon, and in a moment he discovered that the information of the stranger was correct in one particular; the detectives were indeed still watching him, and not quite satisfied as to his real identity, and while our hero was revolving the matter in his mind the door was opened for passengers to go aboard the train.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE clerical gentleman made a rush for the train; our hero moved more slowly, but in time got aboard. He saw that he was being followed and watched, and began to realize that if the clerical gentleman was not up to a trick that it might prove, after all, a lucky meeting.

Bardie moved on until he came to where the stranger was seated, when he asked if he "could occupy part of the seat."

"Certainly," came the answer.

"Eh?" cried Bardie, putting his hand to his ear.

"You can sit here if you want, my friend," came the answer, spoken in a tone loud enough to be overheard by every one in the car.

"Thank you," said Bardie, and he took the seat, and observed at the same instant that one of the detectives had taken the seat right behind him.

One fact, as has been intimated, was plainly apparent; the detectives had no suspicion of the clerical gentleman.

In a few moments the train moved out of the depot and thundered along, and different men settled themselves back for a nap; but our hero did not appear to be sleepy, and when the train came to a stop, owing to some unlooked-for delay, he asked of his neighbor:

"What is the matter?" and received the answer:

"I don't know."

"Eh? Off the track?"

"No. I don't know," came the answer, repeated in a loud voice.

"Oh, you don't know?"

"I do not."

"You are a clergyman?"

"Yes," the answer came by an affirmative shake of the head.

"Where do you preach?"

The answer came in a loud tone.

The deaf man at once asked:

"Your name is Brinkley?"

There came an affirmative shake, when our hero exclaimed:

"Don't you know me?"

"No."

"I know you."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, and you ought to know me; my son goes to your church, my youngest son."

"What is his name?"

"Henry Garra-brant."

"Yes, I know him!" exclaimed the pretended clergyman; "and you are old Mr. Garra-brant?"

"Yes."

The clergyman offered his hand, and there followed a cordial shake, and the two men became well acquainted apparently, and would have talked further, but just at that moment the whistle blew and the train moved on, and a moment later a hand was laid on the shoulder of the detective who sat right behind the two fugitives.

The officer rose and followed his companion to a rear car. The pretended clergyman watched the movement, and a palor overspread his face, and he managed to whisper:

"I do not like that."

"What is the matter?"

"Those whelps have a clew."

"What do you fear?"

"I fear they have been too smart for me."

"For you?"

"Yes."

"It may be me."

"No; but you need not fear. Remember, even if I am doomed I will not give you away."

"What makes you think there is trouble?"

"I caught a glance of that fellow's eye as he touched his 'pard' on the shoulder."

"You think they are on to you?"

"I fear they are."

All the passengers around were asleep, or trying to, and little attention was paid to what neighbors might be doing, and the two fugitives were enabled to talk without being observed.

"What will you do?" demanded Bardie.

"I do not know."

"There are but two of them," said our hero.

"Two; one too many for me."

"But I am with you for better or worse."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"You can do nothing."

"But we can."

"No."

"Why not?"

"I will not fight; I will not harm them. They are doing their duty."

"We need not harm them, but we can save ourselves."

"You are safe now."

"Am I?"

"Yes."

"You are the same."

"I am?"

"Well, you shall be as safe as am I before I leave you."

"No, leave me to my fate."

"We shall see."

Meantime the two officers had gone to a rear car, and the one who had summoned his companion said:

"We have been barking up the wrong tree."

"Eh? On the wrong 'lay'?"

"Yes."

"And we can not leave the train until we reach Poughkeepsie."

"That's all right."

"I do not understand."

"Our man is on the train."

"Our man is on the train?"

"Yes; but he is not the old deaf man."

"Where is our man?"

"The fellow in the same seat with the deaf man."

"Get out!"

"It's true."

"That is a clergyman."

"Is it?"

"Surely."

"We have been well fooled, but we're all right now; that man is Tom Gadding."

"Nonsense!"

"It's true."

"Impossible!"

"What makes you think so?"

"Tom Gadding could never assume that rôle."

"You think so?"

"Yes."

"You are mistaken. I've just got all the points. I tell you that is our man, and we are in luck after all."

"You are sure?"

"Yes."

"But where did you get your clew?"

"I had just a slight suspicion. I saw those two go into the restaurant together, and I just made up my mind to have my eye on them."

"You did not say anything to me."

"No, I had a 'point' there."

"And are you sure you are right?"

"I am dead sure."

"How about the old fellow?"

"He's a pal, I reckon; but don't you notice how nice they run together? I'm an old hand, Andy, at this business. I tell you we've got our man."

"But the other fellow?"

"He's only a convoy, that's my idea, a 'cover' for the other one."

"Will you 'nip them both?"

"No; one is all we want."

"How will you do it?"

"We must think it out. We may have to kill him."

"He is a bad one, eh?"

"I just thought I'd talk the matter over. That fellow is a dead shot, and possibly armed to the teeth under his clerical dress. If he makes fight one of us goes down unless we get on to him so quick he can't 'pull.'"

"Will you take him in the train?"

"No; that will not do, we will not have room, but I only wish we had 'got on to him' before we left York."

"We stop at Poughkeepsie?"

"Yes."

"Well, what's your game?"

"We will have to chance it there, and it's my idea one of us three is a doomed man."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A MOMENT the two detectives studied each other's face, and possibly the thought was running through their minds which of them would be the doomed man in case the chances were reduced down to an average of two.

"You will do your work at Poughkeepsie," said one of the officers.

"That's my idea."

"You anticipate he will leave the train?"

"Yes."

"Why not wait our chance and shoot him down like a dog while in the act of leaping from the train? Why should we take any chances?"

"No, we can not do that; in the first place there is a possibility that we are mistaken, and then again we might not be justified. You know there will be a hundred witnesses, and they would swear we did not make an attempt to arrest him, and sympathy always goes with the dead, but know, even a dead criminal, and still further, our warrant calls for an arrest, not a murder."

"I should always feel I was a murderer if we were to shoot that man down in cold blood without having made an attempt to arrest him."

"What is your scheme?"

"I have thought over several plans."

"And have you decided?"

"I have a suggestion to make."

"Go it."

"One of us will jump in on him, and the other will stand by with a cocked revolver, and if he makes fight then shoot, and he will be the doomed man."

"A good scheme."

"You like that idea for a plan?"

"I do."

"Who will pounce on him?"

"I will."

"And I will stand by with the cocked weapon."

"Hold on; that won't do."

"Well?"

"You pounce on him. You may have scruples as to shooting, and may make up your mind when too late."

"And fear you may fire too soon."

"You need not fear."

"You will hold your temper?"

"I will."

"All right, then; that is our plan."

While the two detectives were talking Bardie and the clerical looking gentleman sat with apprehensive expressions upon their faces; but as the time passed, and the detectives did not return, our hero said:

"I reckon we were mistaken."

"How?"

"They have not marked us."

"Don't you run away with that idea."

"Why do they not come and attempt an arrest?"

"They are arranging their plans. They will not attempt it until we reach Poughkeepsie. They think I will leave the car."

"Let's do it," said Bardie.

"Why, man, we are running at the rate of

forty-five miles an hour. It would be certain death to leap."

"I don't mean that; we will not leap, but how long before we reach Poughkeepsie?"

"We ought to be there in about thirty minutes."

"I have an idea."

"Well?"

"You are a quick man?"

"Yes."

"Go forward to the other car."

"Well?"

"I will follow you."

"Bah! They will have us dead sure then."

"Not if we can get in the baggage-car."

"What do you mean?"

"We will make a change; I will take your disguise, you can take mine."

"A good scheme, if it were practical, but we can not work it, we have not time. It would have been all right if we had worked the game before we left New York."

"We can work it afterward."

"No; I am a doomed man. They are dead on my track; there is no hope for me now. But you take care of yourself; I believe you are a good man, and I do not desire to run you in the same danger as myself."

"See here, my friend; I like you. I have not known you long, but I have no friends in this country, and I've been in tight places before. I'll stand by you. Now, remember, keep cool, no matter what happens, and I'm your man, and I am with you clean through."

"I do not relish being taken."

"You shall not be."

"You will stand by me?"

"To the death."

"No, no; we must not come to death deals. I have no blood on my hands now; I never will have. I can suffer; I can not kill—that is, without sufficient provocation. As I said these men are doing their duty; I will not harm them."

"But you are willing to escape?"

"Yes."

"Then leave the affair to me."

"All right; I will trust to chance."

"How did you discover their plan?" asked Bardie.

"They expect I will leave the train for refreshments at Poughkeepsie."

"And then they will pounce on you?"

"Yes."

"All right, let them pounce; we will be ready for them."

"Remember, no harm must come to them."

"That's all right."

The train thundered on, and at length the shrill signal whistle for a station and a stop sounded. The detectives had not reappeared in the car.

"Here is Poughkeepsie," said the stranger.

"All right. Do not mind me. You get off the car and go for refreshments, and leave the rest to me. If these men do not come near you do not attempt to board the train again, and after it starts I will be at hand. You just lay around and look out for me."

"I fear you mean mischief."

"Do you?"

"Yes."

"You need not; I am not a murderer."

"But you may think yourself justified."

"You need not fear; you do not know me; I have a way for getting men off my track without killing them."

"Tell me what you mean to do?"

"I can in a few words."

"Do so."

"I mean to save you from arrest, that's all."

"How?"

"Oh, you will see when it is done."

"You will force a fight."

"Will I?"

"Yes; you do not know these men; they are old hands, veterans, and when they start in they mean business."

"You know them?"

"I do."

"That's all right. I do not care if they are veterans, as you call them; they shall not capture you."

"I have your promise there shall be no blood shed at all hazards."

"No."

"I will accept your word."

"That is all right."

The train began to slow up, and soon came to a halt before the flashing lights of the Poughkeepsie station, and our hero said:

"Now is your time."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BARDIE was cool as a cucumber, and that was one of his good traits; and it is an excellent and useful characteristic in an emergency. Coolness enables a man to do more at a critical moment than any other human attribute.

The clerical gentleman rose and left the car, and a few seconds later our hero left the car.

He saw the two officers. He was watching for them. He saw them glide after the clerical looking gentleman, and he saw one of them touch him upon the shoulder.

"Can I speak to you a moment, sir?" said the detective.

Our hero's late companion was perfectly cool, as he repeated:

"Speak to me?"

"Yes."

"What do you desire to say to me?"

"You were talking to the deaf man in the car?"

"I was."

"Will you step this way. I wish to ask you a few questions?"

The clerical gentleman considered a moment. He saw the game. They desired to get him away from the crowd, and under all the circumstances he favored the plan himself. If he was to be arrested it was better, and if there was to be a chance for escape it was still better; but he did not acquiesce at once, but said:

"I do not see why you should question me about that man."

"You know him?"

"Yes."

"I wish to ask you some questions."

"Do so here."

"I have a reason why I desire you to step beyond the crowd."

"And I will lose my supper."

"I will detain you but a moment."

The clerical man stepped along with the detective. They walked down the long platform to the end of the building, and stepped across the track behind a lot of freight-cars. It was a very singular proceeding, but, as it chanced, both men were agreed as to the plan, although from different motives.

The moment they were behind the freight-cars the detective suddenly grasped hold of the clerical gentleman by both wrists, and exclaimed:

"Tom Gadding, you are my prisoner!"

At the same instant Detective Number two leaped forward, as though appearing from the ground, and he exclaimed, as he aimed a cocked revolver at the man's head: "Show fight, and you are a dead man."

The words had hardly left the lips of Detective Number two when he went sprawling, and as he fell the pistol was kicked from his grasp, and at the same instant the clerical gentleman broke loose from his captor, and dealt him a blow that downed him.

The whole episode occurred in a few seconds.

"Cover your man," said Bardie, "and if he speaks silence him."

Our hero leaped upon his man, and quick as thought went through his clothes and found a pair of handcuffs, which he clapped upon the man's wrists, and, taking the hint, Tom Gadding also found a pair of handcuffs and clapped them on the wrists of his man, when suddenly there came a shout, and half a dozen men came rushing to the scene of action.

"Ah, you villains, we've got you this time," said Bardie.

Strong men crowded around and asked questions, and Bardie said:

"We are a couple of detectives; we've been shadowing these men and we've got 'em."

The two detectives protested, and announced themselves as the detectives, but their protestations were received with laughs of derision. As the saying goes, our hero had the "bulge" on them—they were handcuffed, and the conditions favored the fugitives.

The two detectives protested vigorously, and Bardie, who had recovered his hearing in a most remarkable manner, said:

"That's it, my beauties, protest, but you will have a better chance when we get you back to York."

The signal whistle sounded, the train was about to start, and the train-men and passengers hurried away on.

Bardie said:

"Tom, we'll lead the rascals down the road a bit and take them up to the hotel till morning. I reckon we've got 'em good enough."

The two detectives sought to protest and resist, when Bardie whispered:

"If you fellows make any trouble we'll silence you, do you mind?"

The two men were compelled to walk along, and two or three idle men attempted to follow, when Bardie ordered them back; and, when the men refused to obey the order, he drew a weapon—the pistol he had captured from the detective—and the men scattered.

The two fugitives hurried their men down the track, and came to a place where a lot of boats were moored. Bardie led the way down to the river. One of the boats had the oars in it, and the two detectives were tossed into the boat. Our hero, as our readers know, was a splendid oarsman, and he drove the boat forward just as a man came running down to the river-bank, shouting.

"Is this your boat?" called Bardie.

"Yes; bring it back."

"We will in about half an hour. We do not want your old boat, and we will pay you well for the use of it."

"Bring back my boat!"

"Yes, in half an hour," called Bardie, and he pulled more vigorously.

"What are you rascals going to do?" demanded one of the detectives.

"See how you fellows can swim with your hands tied," said Bardie, in a cold, relentless tone.

"You mean to murder us in cold blood."

"No; in cold water, my friend."

"What's that?" suddenly demanded Gadding.

The night was very dark, and the splash of oars was heard.

"It's the fellow coming after his boat. Let him come; we'll drown him along with these other fellows."

The two detectives sat side by side, like a pair of statues cast in bronze.

A moment later and the man in the boat came along after them, and Bardie ceased rowing, and waited for the man to come alongside.

"Well, what do you want?"

"My boat."

"And you want us to get out of it?"

"I want you to pull back ashore."

"And suppose we refuse?"

"I will have you arrested."

"You will?"

"I will, by thunder!"

"All right, sonny; call a policeman."

Even the detectives were compelled to laugh.

"See here, my friend, you keep boats to hire?"

"I do."

"Consider this one hired."

"That won't do."

"Pull up here, and I will pay the money."

"No; you fellows are thieves."

"You're right, my man," said the detective.

"You pull back ashore and give the alarm."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"You can't play that on me," said the man; "I'm no countryman."

It was Bardie's turn to laugh, and he did so right heartily.

"Come," cried the man; "will you give me my boat?"

"And do you expect us to walk ashore?"

"No."

"What will we do?"

"Give me my boat."

"See here, Mister Man, you annoy me."

"You fellows turn round with that boat and pull back to where you came from."

There came a sudden report, and a bullet whistled over the boat owner's head.

The man uttered a shriek, and commenced to pull away like mad, and resuming his oars, Bardie pulled toward the opposite shore, and in due time he arrived, and the two detectives were assisted out of the boat.

"Now, my friends," said Bardie, "you are in luck."

"Who are you?" asked one of the detectives.

"I'm a stranger, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, I prefer to remain one."

"We will get you some day; but I will tell you this much, we are not after you."

"Oh, thank you!"

"And as to Tom Gadding, we'll get him some day, and then we will make him pay for this job."

"You fellows are not as game as I took you

as to. You ought to admire the manner in which it was done."

"We do admire the manner in which it was done—it was well done; but we'll do our act yet."

"Oh, you fellows are tragedians, I see; you do the heavy act. Well, we are only comedians. We do the farce, you know; and now you fellows can walk the track to Sing Sing; and cross over quick or the countrymen may take you for runaways."

"Take these things off, you fellows; will you?"

"Why should we? They belong to you," said Bardie; and he added: "Now, gentlemen, good-morning; daylight will soon appear; but remember, if you and I ever meet again it will go harder with you than it has this time; good-night, sweetheart, good-night."

Bardie pulled away from the shore, and headed his boat up stream.

"What will you do?" asked Gadding.

"What will I do?"

"Yes."

"I will pull up stream a mile or two and land."

"On this side?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Well, those fellows will think we have gone back to the other side."

"I reckon you have it right. We have lost our baggage," said Gadding.

"Not much," said Bardie. "I have mine here."

Our hero had ingeniously stored all his really valuable baggage about his person, and as he pulled along he said:

"I've a change of clothing for both of us."

"That's lucky."

"Indeed it is, for within an hour after daylight there will be telegrams all over the state."

"And what will we do? We will be hunted like dogs."

"Will we?"

"Yes."

"You just leave that matter to me, on one condition. I must know all about you, and if I am satisfied with your story, you can stick to me, and I will stick to you, and we can defy all the detectives in the land."

Bardie pulled about three miles up the river and then said:

"We will land here."

He ran the boat ashore and both men alighted. Bardie looked at his watch, and said:

"It is within an hour and a half of daylight; we can get over a good deal of ground."

"Which way will you go?"

"Do you know the country around here?"

"Yes, I do; I know every foot of it."

"Can we get over to the mountains?"

"We can."

"How long a tramp is it?"

"Seven or eight hours."

"Suppose we find a nook under the river bank here where we can rest until to-morrow night. I do not think it safe to move at present."

The two fugitives wandered along the bank until they came to an overhanging cliff, and crawling up its face, they found a natural cave, and into the latter they crawled, and under all the circumstances they were very fortunate, as a rain set in, and in a few moments they would have been drenched to the skin.

It was late in the fall of the year when the incidents we have narrated occurred. There had been a warm spell, but the rain was a break in the weather and an intimation of a colder season.

It was a shallow cave, a mere indentation in the face of the rock practically, but a shelving ledge well shielded them from the rain as it beat at the time, and they were all right.

The two men were pretty well tired out, and they stretched themselves on some leaves and river drift that they had gathered, and were soon fast asleep.

It was well into the day when they awoke, and a cold, drizzling, disagreeable day it was, and yet they were comparatively comfortable, as they were sheltered from the wind and were both warmly clad.

"This is comfort," said Gadding.

"Well, yes; a sort of comfort," answered Bardie.

"It is comfort, because for the time being it is safety and freedom," said Gadding.

"You are right there," confirmed Bardie.

"I tell you it is hard to be hunted and hounded, and to know no peace or security," continued Gadding.

"It is corroborated," said Bardie.

"Then you are a fugitive?"

"I am."

"And for how long a time have you been a fugitive?"

"Long enough to get used to it," said Bardie; adding decisively, however: "but I am not used to it, and I never will be."

"Nor am I."

"How long have you been a fugitive?" asked Bardie.

"About all my life, I may say."

There came a shadow to our hero's face. He had hoped his new companion was an innocent man, but his confession intimated the contrary.

"I must hear your story," said our hero.

"You shall hear my story; you are a good fellow, and you have done me a good service; but I can not stand it much longer; I will be taken some day."

"You will be taken some day, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, that depends; and you say I have done you a good service?"

"Yes."

"I may do you a greater service yet before we separate; but between you and me, my friend, I am hungry."

Bardie smiled as he spoke the words.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE wind fairly howled over their heads and ran sweeping down the cliff; but as it came from the land side the fierce rain did not beat in on the two fugitives. And when Bardie drew a number of sandwiches from his pocket the eyes of his companion glistened.

"I am hungry," he said.

"Are you?"

"I am."

"And I am hungry; in fact, I've always a pretty good appetite."

The two men commenced to eat, and once again Gadding exclaimed:

"This is real comfort. I wish I could stay here all my life."

"You would like to stay here all your life?"

"Well, there is a sense of security that is very comforting under all the circumstances."

Our hero looked sharply at his companion. He saw that he possessed an intelligent, even a good, face. He was, upon the whole, a fine-looking man, and, evidently, not more than two- or three-and-thirty.

"How old are you?" asked Bardie.

"How old do you think?"

"I should say you were rising thirty."

"I am; yes, I am in my thirty-third year."

"And you have been a fugitive all your life?"

"Yes; pretty much all my life."

"Did you ever commit a crime?"

"Yes, I have; a common burglary. I am really a criminal."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Bardie.

"It is true. I will not attempt any concealment with you, as I am fully satisfied that you are a sincere and square man."

"And yet I am a fugitive, and I am accused of a terrible crime."

"Of what crime are you accused?"

"Murder."

"You are innocent?"

"I am."

"I wish I could say I am innocent; but no, I am a criminal; but one thing I can say, I never harmed a living soul, not even a detective. I remember once, when I was pursued by a detective, I had him dead to rights. I could have killed him, and I was tempted to do so, as by his death I could escape. It was a question of arrest or escape, and I could only escape over his dead body."

"And what did you do?"

"I surrendered."

"Then you are not a criminal at heart?"

"I can swear I am not."

"How is it then you became one?"

"I was driven to crime!"

"Nonsense! no man is driven to crime."

"I was."

"I can see how a man can be persecuted, but it does not follow because he is that he need become a criminal."

"What you say is correct, and I can see now that I would have proved myself more of a man if I had resisted, but I tell you mine has been a hard lot."

"Will you tell me your story?"

"I will, I am a foundling."

"A what?"

"A foundling. I was placed in an orphan

asylum, or rather a nursery when I was but a few months of age."

"By whom?"

"I never knew."

"Then you never knew your parents?"

"Never."

"And you have no idea or suspicion as to your parentage?"

"I have not."

"Well, in one way your career and mine have been similar; I did not know my parentage until I was a man grown."

"Will you tell me your story?"

Bardie proceeded and told his story, and when he had concluded Gadding resumed his own narrative, and said:

"From the nursery I was placed in an orphan asylum, and there I received pretty fair teaching, but at the age of thirteen I was wrongfully accused of crime. The proofs were all against me; I protested my innocence, but was sent to a reformatory, as the crime of which I had been accused was a very serious one."

"And you were innocent?"

"I was as innocent of that crime as you are to-day. Another lad committed the crime and accused me."

"Did you never get square with him?"

"Alas! his own sin found him out. He died upon the gallows when but twenty-three, poor fellow."

"And you were sent to a reformatory?"

"I was, and very badly treated; and, watching a chance, I ran away, and started out in the world, resolved to be an honest man and make an honest living. I wandered around the country for a couple of years, and then secured, by a chance, a position in a country store. But, alas! my bad luck followed me. The store was robbed; I was accused of the robbery, and arrested. I again protested my innocence; but they secured my previous record, and on that and the evidence I was convicted and sent to jail under a sentence for five years. I remained one year in the jail, and escaped. Then I went west, and in good time got another position on a railroad. Again my bad luck followed me. The express car was robbed one night, and after some weeks I was arrested as one of the robbers, and every effort was made to induce me to name my confederates."

"How did it come about that you were arrested?"

"Ah! my previous record. Yes, sir; a detective was put upon the case, and he started out to study up the records of the men on the road, and he soon managed to find out that I was an escaped convict; and my record was my doom, for on that alone I was convicted and sent to jail once more."

"And up to that time you had lived an honest life?"

"I had."

"Well, you were in bad luck."

"Yes, I was wrongfully convicted; indeed, I barely escaped being lynched, as the express messenger at the time of the robbery was badly wounded; indeed, for a long time it was thought he would not recover."

"And you were sent to jail again?"

"I was, and I managed to escape once more; but I had a worse record than ever, and I was still an honest man, and I was determined to remain honest. I came east and went to Pennsylvania, and secured work under an assumed name as a common coal miner. I worked hard; but again my bad luck followed me. There was a strike and a riot, and houses were burned and much property destroyed. I took no hand in the affair. I was in court as a spectator at the time of the trial of several men who had been arrested on suspicion, and again I was recognized by a detective, and at once I was arrested, and soon it was made to appear that I was a desperate character, and at the bottom of all the mischief. At any rate, they had a good chance to get rid of me, and I was returned to finish a sentence of ten years for the express robbery."

"And you were still an honest man?"

"As I live, I was an honest man; but ill luck attended me, and in the end I became desperate."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"I CAN never approve of a man's becoming a criminal under any circumstances," said Bardie; "but I will say it is not strange that you were forced to the commission of crime."

"I did not voluntarily commit crime. When I was returned to the jail they treated me with

the utmost harshness because of my former escape; indeed, many times I was tempted to take my own life, but, would you believe it? conscientious scruples alone prevented me. I have always been a believer in God and future punishments and rewards, and I did not dare take my own life; but I made up my mind to attempt my escape once more, and in good time I succeeded, but I was fired upon and wounded, and still I kept on and reached the woods, and there I found a horse, and on this I mounted. The horse was saddled and bridled, and the taking of him was my first crime. Wounded as I was, I rode for sixteen hours, and then from sheer exhaustion was compelled to dismount and let the horse go. It was near morning, and I struggled on to where I saw a light gleaming from a house window. I crept to the house; the people were moving about and I was admitted, and I told them I had been hunting and had wounded myself with my own gun.

I was taken in, and discovered that the house was occupied by a widow and her daughter.

"Did they suspect who you were?"

"Let me proceed and tell you all."

"Yes, go ahead," said Bardie.

"The widow would have sent for a doctor, nearly twenty miles distant, but I begged her not to do so, and I think from that moment she suspected something wrong, but she said no more about a doctor and treated me with every attention and kindness. I remained in her house six weeks, and in the end fully recovered, and when I was about able to go away she came to my room one day and said:

"You are now fully recovered?"

"I said: 'I am, thanks to your kind care.'"

"I can harbor you no longer," she said, and from her words I knew that she knew, or at least suspected, my identity, and a moment later she confirmed my suspicion with the remark:

"I do not know as I did right. You came to my house a fellow-mortal, wounded, in sore distress, and I gave you shelter, and I have done all that I can to restore you to life. I trust you will receive what has befallen you as a warning and will sin no more."

"I said: 'Madame, you think I am a criminal?'"

"Yes; I know who you are. You are Tom Gadding, the wicked man of many crimes; but even for you there is forgiveness and mercy. Your life has been spared, and I trust you will make a better use of your opportunities."

"Then I told her my story."

"Did she believe your strange tale?"

"Yes, she did believe my story; for from the moment I told her she treated me in a decidedly different manner. I went away."

"And have you ever seen her since?"

"No."

"How long ago did this occur?"

"About nine years ago. I told you she had a daughter. The girl, at the time I was taken in at the house, was about nine years of age. One year later the widow died. Her death was the result of an accident, and her daughter was left helpless in the world. I went in the neighborhood in disguise to learn about them, and learned, as I have said, that the widow was dead, and I learned further that there was a mortgage on the farm, and after her death the owner of the mortgage foreclosed and seized the property, leaving the daughter a beggar. I learned that the child had been adopted by a farmer, and I determined to go and see her secretly. When I approached the house I heard cries and screams, and rushing to the window, beheld the man beating the orphan in the most brutal manner. I rushed in and knocked the brute down, and seizing the girl in my arms ran out with her. We traveled to the woods, and the child told me how brutally she had been treated, and I said to her:

"I owe my life to you and your mother. I will take care of you, I will become your brother, and see that no harm comes to you."

"It was but a fair return on your part," said Bardie.

"Yes; but I had really promised more than I could perform. I said I would take care of her, but I was a wounded fellow, homeless and penniless."

"But you had not committed any crime."

"Up to that time I had committed no crime save the stealing of a horse, and I learned that the owner eventually recovered him, and I am only responsible in that affair for the cost I put him to in getting back the animal."

"Well, that is a fair way of looking at it; but what did you do?"

"I started with the girl, and we walked

many, many miles. I crossed with her one state after another, coming eastward, and I traveled to New England."

"How did you live by the way?"

"I begged for what we eat, and we slept where we could, and every night I watched over the child, and when we arrived in New England I took her to a house to board. I said she was my sister, that I was a mechanic out of work, and that as soon as I got work I would come for her, and that I would pay good board."

"What prospect had you for work?"

"Ah, I had broken up at last. I resolved to do for the child of my benefactor that which I had never done for myself. I determined to become a criminal and steal, and I did rob a farm-house. I secured one hundred dollars in cash."

"You were a thief at last."

"Yes; I was a criminal at last; but, mark you, I took down the name of my victim and the exact amount of which I had robbed him."

"Why did you keep the record?"

"I have kept the record of every crime I have committed."

"That is strange."

"I know the names of every one of my victims. I have their addresses and the date of the robbery, and the amount of which I robbed them."

"What was your purpose in keeping the record?"

"I always indulged a hope that some day I would be able to refund all that I had stolen; and now I've a strange statement to make: I have repaid every victim, and I have one creditor for the whole amount, and what is more, I never used one dollar of all my robberies for my own personal benefit."

"That is indeed a strange statement."

"It is; and I have some still stranger revelations to make. Yes, my life has been a strange one. I can claim I am an odd criminal."

"You are; but proceed with your weird story."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONTINUING his narrative, Gadding said:

"First let me explain how it is I have but one victim."

"Yes, do so."

"I robbed a bank of five thousand dollars, and with that amount I repaid every one of my other victims, and I have letters from some of them, offering to return the stolen money to me again."

"And did you refuse it?"

"I did."

"You say you expect some day to settle with your last victim?"

"There was a time when I hoped to do so, but now I am hopeless. I shall be taken some day, and my career will end. I shall die in jail."

"See here, my friend; you will do no such thing."

"Do you call me your friend?"

"Yes, I do—on the strength of your story, which I believe to be true."

"The tale I have told you is the truth—nothing but the truth."

"And it is a very remarkable story. And were you ever arrested again?"

"Yes, and again I escaped from prison, and these escapes gained for me a reputation for being the most desperate burglar on the face of the earth."

"Is your real name Gadding?"

"I have no real name."

"But was that the name under which you were registered in the asylum?"

"Yes."

"But it is not your real name?"

"I am at liberty to adopt any name I choose, for I am nameless."

"And you have never heard anything to indicate your parentage?"

The robber for a moment was silent.

"Why do you not answer me?"

"You would laugh were I to relate a very singular experience."

"No, I would not laugh."

"I think I have seen my mother?"

"You think you have seen your mother?"

"Yes."

"Under what circumstances?"

"Ah, I dare not tell you."

"Yes, tell me; do not fear."

"You will laugh?"

"No, I will not."

"I can not help it if you do, but I will tell you the truth; I have seen her in my dreams."

Bardie did not laugh, but an involuntary look of incredulity did overspread his face.

"Ah, I thought you would laugh."

"I am not laughing, but I do not take much stock in dreams."

"Nor I; and I do not really attach any supernatural importance to my own dreams; and I think I can account for them; but one thing I will say, they are pleasant to me, and the angel of my dreams has exerted a great influence over me; indeed, the only incentive to honor has come through this apparition of a dream."

"Tell me about your dream."

"When I was in the orphan asylum I heard some of the children who remembered their parents tell about them, and I often wondered that I had no parent to recollect, and I asked one of our teachers or matrons one day about it, and she being a kind, good soul, told me my parents were in Heaven. Her statement made a great impression upon my mind, and at once my imagination became excited, and I pictured an angel as my mother, and one night in a dream there came to me a beautiful woman, and in my sleep I called her mamma, and she called back to me 'My child,' and she seemed to lay her hand on my brow, and she talked to me and told me to be a good boy, and some day I would come to her and be her angel son."

Bardie was deeply affected; the story was, indeed, under all the circumstances, a very affecting one.

"Have you seen your mother often in your dreams?"

"Often when I was a child, but only rarely since I have been a man, and only once since I became a criminal."

"And does this apparition of your dreams always talk to you?"

"Not since I really became a thief; no, she came just once, and then for an instant cast upon me a reproachful glance and disappeared."

"I think your dream can be accounted for on natural grounds, but it is a very strange incident all the same."

"It is an incident that has exerted a great influence over me, and now I've a still more strange incident to relate; I have a photograph of the apparition."

"You have a photograph of the apparition?"

"I have."

"The apparition of your dream?"

"Yes."

Our hero felt a suspicion creeping through his mind. It came to him that after all he was talking to a maniac and listening to the wild, weird narrative of a disordered brain.

"That seems strange to say, Gadding."

"It does."

"And yet is easily explained."

"I wish you would explain to me how you made a photograph of a fantasy of the brain."

"I will do so."

"Proceed."

"I dreamed often of seeing the apparition, and it was always the same face, and it made a deep impression upon my mind and memory; indeed, the features fixed themselves as a tangible portrait on my remembrance, and one day I had a pencil in my hand and I commenced to draw a face. I discovered that I was a natural artist, and when I had completed the face I recognized that I had reproduced the face of the apparition of my dreams. Afterward, when in prison, I secured materials through the kindness of the keeper, and carefully reproduced the face, and when I again escaped from prison I took the ink drawing to one of those photo-engraving companies, and had the face reproduced, and it is a splendid picture."

"This is a remarkable story."

"Ah! but I have a still more remarkable sequel to relate. About six weeks ago I published the picture in an illustrated paper, and a week later received a letter asking about the original of the picture. I answered the letter, but never received an answer in return."

"And you are a natural artist?"

"I am."

"Why did you not seek to earn an honest living as an artist?"

"I did do so, and I became an art student, but alas! I was hounded from place to place. I never dared reveal my real identity to those with whom I studied, and the detectives always got on my track, and I was compelled to flee."

"Why did you not flee to Europe?"

"I never had the money."

"You had the proceeds of your robberies?"

"I never used one cent of those robberies for my own benefit, never."

"And for whose benefit have you used them?"

Your question brings me back to the part of my narrative where I tell of my first crime."

"Yes, and now take up your story there and tell me in detail."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"I told you I stole a hundred dollars; well, I went back within a week to where I had left the little girl, my charge."

"You have not told me the girl's name?"

"Her name is Claire."

"Her last name?"

"I will tell you some other day, not now."

"Why not?"

"Well, at least let me first finish my narrative."

"All right."

"I returned and paid one week's board for the little girl and then went away. I sent money for her board, and she remained with the people for three months; at the end of that time I succeeded in having a nice wardrobe prepared for her. And I took her to a boarding-school, and there she has remained ever since. She is a young lady now, one of the most beautiful girls you ever saw, and she is well educated. She is a teacher in the school where she was educated. She is now self-supporting, and since she has been teaching I have not taken a dollar that did not rightfully belong to me."

"How long has she been teaching?"

"For over a year now."

"Do you ever see her?"

"I have seen her; yes, often at the school. They think I am her brother—that I am an artist. They do not dream that the pretended Henry Armour is the notorious criminal, Tom Gadding."

"Then the girl's name is Armour?"

"Yes, I took her name so as to carry out the deception as to being her brother."

"And does the girl know who you really are?"

"Yes."

"Does she know that you are really a criminal?"

"She does."

"And she respects you still?"

"She loves me as though I really were her own brother."

"Does she know that you became a criminal solely on her account?"

"No; I would not tell her that. On the contrary, I've made her believe that every dollar spent for her education has been honestly earned."

"And does she believe you?"

"I fear not; but she pretends to believe me."

"What does she really suspect?"

"I believe in my heart that she really suspects the absolute truth."

"Say, Tom, let me be your friend?"

"You are my friend."

"Then tell me all."

"What shall I tell you?"

"You love this girl?"

"As a sister."

"Bah! you love her beyond that."

"No, no."

"Yes, you do."

"I will not permit myself to do so. I am a criminal."

"Well, technically you are; morally you are not. Yours has been a hard lot; but it strikes me that your great misfortune has been in not having a friend with whom to advise. For what crime are you being so closely pursued now?"

"The bank robbery. The officers of that bank are determined to run me down, and I am sure they will succeed some day."

"They never will, old man."

"They will. Yes, I know they will."

"Tell me about this Claire Armour."

"She is supporting me now with the money she makes."

"And she loves you?"

"As a brother, yes."

"But I see through this strange romance, and now listen to me. I am your friend; we will pull together. I have a scheme in my mind, and you shall become a partner with me."

"What is your scheme?"

"We are bank burglars."

"Yes."

"We are both well-ventured men. I am inno-

"I would be willing to die if permitted to live five years in peace."

"You shall live very many years in peace barring the usual chances of human life."

"No, no; those men are on my track. They will follow me up, and in the end they will 'close in' on me, and I will never again attempt to escape from jail."

"You shall not go to jail, old man. I tell you I have a scheme."

"And what is your scheme?"

"We will go where there are no jails, judges, juries, or detectives."

"Where can we go to escape them?"

"To the far, far west. Yes, we will go out and become prospectors, and some day we will strike a mine, and we will both cover our identity. We will make a fortune, and you can settle with the bank and flee to Europe, and you can take Claire with you, and dwell in peace where no one will know of your past career, and I can also manage to arrange with the wretches who are pursuing me."

There came a cold smile over the face of Tom Gadding as he said:

"I've tried that; your scheme is but a wild dream."

"You have tried it, eh?"

"Yes; I spent two years in the wilds, and if it had not been for one thing I should have remained there as a recluse, but as true as I sit here I was trailed even to the wilderness, and one day in a ranch I was confronted with my own portrait in an illustrated paper, and I was compelled to flee. No, there is no place on earth where I can hide from my pursuers."

"Bah, man! you are in a nervous condition. Did the parties who confronted you with your portrait accuse you of being the man?"

"No, but they knew me all the same."

"They did?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"I know they did."

"Bah! it was all your imagination; you came east again?"

"Yes, I believe I am safer here; there are more hiding-places."

"Well, speaking from a certain standpoint, you are right, but now, listen: you have acted under your own volition all these years, and you have passed from hard luck to harder luck; would it not be well to take the advice of another?"

"What do you propose?"

"I propose that you write to Miss Claire Armour, and tell her that she may not hear from you for a year or two; tell her that you have found a good friend, and that some day you will return a free man."

"Have you really confidence in your scheme?"

"I have."

"And you propose that I should write?"

"Yes, and tell me, have the detectives got on to this Armour cover?"

"No."

"Then there is no risk in writing the letter."

"I think not."

"You are homeless and penniless?"

"I am."

"You have no scheme of your own? You are practically but a hunted criminal?"

"I am."

"Had you been alone last night you would have been arrested."

"I would have been, surely."

"But as there were two of us we escaped?"

"Yes."

"Good; we will try it again together, and see what will come."

CHAPTER XL.

THE two men eat a good, hearty meal, and our hero produced pen, paper, and envelope, and Tom Gadding wrote the letter as directed, and Bardie agreed to post it.

After the letter was written Tom Gadding said:

"You are not well posted in this land?"

"No, but I am a man without any nationality at present. I've been called a Monte-Cristo. Well, it's a Monte-Cristo I'll be some day."

"We will be tracked before to-morrow night. These American detectives are like sleuth-hounds."

"Are they?"

"They are."

"Well, they will not capture me nor you either, if you follow strictly my advice."

"Upon your invitation I have cast in my lot with you."

"And you will never regret it."

"What is your scheme?"

"To go west. Yes, way west."

"But I mean your immediate scheme."

"My first game will be to throw those detectives off our track."

"You will not succeed unless we separate."

"That will not be in accordance with my plan."

"If we attempt to travel together we will be overtaken."

"Now let us see. You are acquainted with the trails in those mountains over to the westward?"

"I am."

"My idea is to go there and hide ourselves for a few weeks until the immediate excitement following last night's adventure has settled down, and then we will make our way west."

"Ah! but we will not travel far."

"We will travel all the way. I've something to teach you, Tom; I'm quite a potter artist, I am, and I will work a scheme that will please you and prove a winning game."

"You really inspire me with courage."

"I'll make a man of you, and now don't you forget it, and I'll place you in a position from where you can defy all your enemies."

"One moment; I never had but one real enemy. The men who are pursuing me look upon me as a desperate criminal."

"Well, you do take a fair view of the situation."

"I do."

"Who was your real enemy?"

"The lad who first accused me of crime, and to him I owe all my misfortune. I owe all to a false record, a bad record, and it is that record that has pursued me."

"But your career has its compensation."

"How?"

"You have been the means of rescuing a helpless orphan, and to her you have been a great benefactor."

"That is true."

"Well, old man, look ahead now. I've got big ideas in my head as concerns you and myself also, and I believe all will come right in the end for both of us. We may have a hard time to get west, but we'll get there all the same in spite of all the detectives in this broad land, and we will be winners after we get there."

"You fill my heart with hope and courage."

"And that is what I want to do, and to-night we make our start. But, I say, it was a nice game we worked on those detectives."

"It was, but they will be on our track. Yes, you can make up your mind that every farmer within twenty miles around here is on the lookout for us. There is a large reward offered for me, you know. I was engaged in but one bank robbery, and I carried out the scheme all alone, but they connect me with several other bank robberies, and they believe if they catch me they get the principal man."

"How large is the reward offered for you?"

"Twenty five thousand dollars in all."

"Well, there is about the same amount offered for me. We would prove a fortune to a pair of detectives."

"That is so, in case of our identification."

"They will have to catch us before they identify us."

"I think they will."

"What has become of your hope and courage?"

"We are playing against too great odds."

"Well, now, you trust to me. I am only a poor Paddy, as they call us in this land of yours, but I'll show them what Paddy can do—and that's what 'Paddy gave the drum!'"

The two men rested until night. Toward evening the rain ceased, and it blew up clear and cold.

It was about nine o'clock when Bardie said:

"Now, we will make a start."

The two men had changed their appearance in a most remarkable manner. Our hero had assumed the rôle of a poor immigrant Dutchman, and Gadding was got up in similar style.

Their other disguises were packed and bound in a parcel, and they issued from the cave.

They were compelled to descend to the river bank, and they walked along until they came to a place where they could climb up to the road, and along the latter they proceeded until they came to a place where a light gleamed, and Bardie said:

"It's a German beer shop. We will go in."

"No, no, that will not do," said Gadding.

"Why not?" asked Bardie.

"We will give them a clew from the very start. I've had lots of experience, let me tell you."

"Well, it's to throw them off that I go in here. Do you mind, it will be known that two men passed along here. If they do not know what sort of men they were, why, we will be pursued; but if they do know, our pursuers will go in another direction."

"The risk is too great; you had better take my advice."

"And what is your advice?"

"We will keep on our way and dodge all houses and avoid being seen if possible."

"Just this once take my advice, and then we will act upon my judgment until we make one mistake, after that we will act upon yours."

"It may be too late, but do as you choose."

"I'll bring you out all right. Do not have any fear for me; I generally know what I am about."

The two men boldly entered the beer saloon, which was located on the outskirts of a small river village, and finding several Germans gathered around Bardie said in most excellent German:

"Good-evening, countrymen."
Gadding was surprised a moment later to hear our hero talking Dutch like a native, and he could see from the approving nods of the men that he was displaying a great knowledge of localities, and indeed acting the rôle of a German to the letter.

The two men had several glasses of beer, and Bardie purchased quite a good store of Dutch food in the way of sausage, rye bread and the like, and when the two men came out to take the road our hero asked:

"Well, what do you think of it now?"

CHAPTER XLI.

TOM GADDING expressed his satisfaction.

"I reckon we are 'covered' a little," said Bardie.

"Indeed, we are, my friend. I did not know you could speak German so well."

"Ah, I can, and several other languages, and my gift will serve us well."

"It will."

"And now," said Bardie, "we want to post your letter. I've got the direction to the post-office, and when we have dropped the note we'll move on toward the mountains, and I reckon we've a bit of food to last us for a few days."

"If we make for the mountains of Sullivan County we will find all the game we need," said Tom Gadding.

"All right, the Irish name of the county suits me," responded our hero.

We will ask of our readers permission to digress right here for a few paragraphs, in order to point out an important fact, one that it will be well to remember.

Tom Gadding told his remarkable story, and

showed how it is possible for an innocent man to be pursued as a criminal, and the whole trouble lay in his bad record. It was this record that pursued him, it was this record that first attracted suspicion toward and each time led to his conviction and imprisonment.

It is a fact that the record of an accused person almost daily decides his fate in the courts.

When the testimony is conflicting, the judge goes into the man's previous record: if that is good the accused gets the benefit of it. If it is bad it weighs in the judge's mind in confirming his judgment as to guilt. In other words a good character is about the best safeguard a young man can throw around himself.

It is a rare thing for a person to receive a bad record through accident or malevolence; but it is a frequent thing for young men to be careless about their record, and a bad record once attached to one's name it is almost impossible to clear it off, and, as stated, the best safeguard against possible false accusations is a good record. The sword that stabs unfair suspicion is a good previous character, and all young men and women should be careful throughout their whole lives to avoid doing anything that will affix to their names a bad record.

Bardie and Tom Gadding found the post-office, and dropped in the latter's letter, and then the two men started for the mountains.

By midnight they had covered twelve miles, and sat down to rest at a small country place where had been commenced a station for a new railroad that was being built through that section of country, and Bardie remarked:

"I'd like to crawl in here and spend the night."

"But it won't do," said Gadding.

The words had hardly left his mouth, when there shot across them a gleam of light. On the next instant three men carrying lanterns approached.

"Halloo, what are you fellows doing there?" demanded one of the men.

Bardie undertook to act as spokesman, and he said:

"Vot vos dot your pizziness?"

"Well you will explain who you are, or you will find out whether it is my business or not."

"I vos explain noddings; it vos not your pizziness who I vos."

"Well, I reckon I know who you are: your name is Tom Gadding, and that fellow may be Bardie O'Connor."

The man spoke with a flourish, as though he expected to see both men betray considerable trepidation; but instead both merely laughed in a quiet manner.

The three men held a few moments' consultation, and then started away.

"It is time for us to get," said Gadding.

"It is?"

"Yes."

"Why so?"

"Those fellows are going for assistance: they suspect us, and it is as I told you it would

be, we have been advertised throughout twenty counties and we're going to have a hot time."

"Then you propose that we run?"

"Yes."

"And those fellows will then conclude that they are right, and will get upon our trail."

"But we will get a few hours' start."

"This is a matter we must consider."

"I tell you, the best thing for us to do is to 'flit.'"

"It will make it a chase."

"That is just what I have anticipated. We will be taken."

"You think so?"

"I do."

"Well, I'm not the lad to be taken. I love my freedom too well; but I am settled to your opinion: we had better 'flit.'"

The two men started to moved away, when Gadding whispered:

"Halloo! see there!"

"What is it?"

"They have left a fellow to watch us."

"Is that so?"

"There he is, behind that pile of boards!"

"We will have to nab that fellow!" said Bardie.

"We will have to act quickly."

"There is a creek down there."

"Yes."

"The sneak and the creek will go well together, or rather, the creek will run freer if the fellow is run into it. Now we will separate: and between one or the other of us, in the darkness, can come upon that fellow, and we'll let him take a swim. Yes, it's well to go with the swim nowadays."

Gadding caught on to Bardie's hint, and the two men separated, and at once they saw the fellow make a move. Our hero was a regular cat in his movements, and in less than two minutes he was on to the "sneak" and nabbed him. The man would have made an outcry, but Bardie had hold of him by the throat, so quickly and with such a firm grasp the fellow was unable to utter a single sound.

Just as Bardie seized the man, Gadding came up, and the two lifted their prisoner from his feet and ran him toward a little bridge that overhung the creek.

The man struggled, but he was helpless in the hands of his two powerful captors, and with a one, two, three, they let him swing, and over he went into the water with a splash.

"Now we'll 'flit,'" said Bardie.

The two men started forward, but had gone but a short distance when they heard voices, and the next moment there came a sound more startling and ominous.

"They're on to us," said Gadding, and a palor overspread his face.

"That was the bay of a hound," said Bardie.

"Yes."

"Well, they are on our track?"

"They are."

"Let them come," was the quiet rejoinder.



CHAPTER XLII.

THE two fugitives soon had full evidence that there was a company of men upon their tracks, and Bardie uttered threats of vengeance, and was really surprised to be rebuked by his companion.

"We will escape if we can," said Gadding; "but in order to do so no real harm must come to any one of our pursuers."

"What is that you say?" exclaimed Bardie. Gadding repeated his admonition, and Bardie exclaimed:

"Do you suppose I'm going to be hunted like a dog by a lot of strangers?"

It must be remembered that Bardie bore in his mind a recollection of the many huntings he had suffered in Ireland.

"You must remember," said Gadding, "that these are honorable men."

"They are?"

"Yes. They think we are criminals."

"They do?"

"Yes."

"What do they know about us, anyhow?"

"Probably word has been passed all through this country, and we will be hunted like foxes. Indeed, I think, for the safety of both, we had better separate."

"We will do nothing of the kind. I like you, although you talk like a preacher, and sure it was a very appropriate disguise you had on when I first met you."

"You have been of great service to me, or rather, you have shown yourself ready to be, and I like you, and I would sacrifice myself at this moment to save you."

"You would?"

"I would, certainly."

"You mean that?"

"I do."

"And are you willing to let me toss you as a sop to Cerberus?"

"How do you mean?"

"Well, if you permit yourself to be taken, and I like you, and I would sacrifice myself at this moment to save you."

"I had been thinking of that."

"You had, eh?"

"Yes."

"Seriously?"

"Yes."

"Well, now, see here; it's sink or swim together between you and I, and don't let me hear anything to the contrary from you."

"There is one point we must consider."

"Well, let's have it, my man!"

"You are an innocent man."

"I am."

"Gadding have never broken the law."

"That's so."

"Our cases are different; I am really a criminal."

"I doubt that."

"Well, I have been a robber. I am being pursued for a crime actually committed, but you are an innocent man. They have no right to pursue you, and you would be justified in adopting any measures for your defense. It is different, again, with me—I would not be justified."

"What are you getting at anyhow?"

"I'll tell you."

"Do."

"Those men will follow us right up."

"They had better not, that's all."

"They will."

"At their peril, then, my man."

"That's it exactly. You can defend yourself, I can not."

"But I'll defend you."

"No."

"Well, you have queer ideas. Shure, it's strange that a man like you should be hounded as a criminal. You have really the disposition of a missionary."

"I will never stain my hands with blood."

"Would you kill a mouse if he bit you?"

"I would," answered Gadding, with a laugh.

"Would you kill a rat, that's bigger than a mouse?"

"I would," again answered Gadding, still with a quiet laugh.

"Would you kill a cat?"

"I would under certain circumstances."

"Well, would you kill a dog under certain circumstances?"

"I would."

"Well, then, let your mind be easy, for it's only a dog we'll kill to-night. Now, see here, I am not an assassin, and I would not kill a man any sooner than you would, but, do you mind, I would enjoy tossing a pursuer into a creek as we did the other fellow."

"Yes, so would I," said Gadding.

"You would really be as wicked as that?" suggested Bardie, in a bantering tone.

"Yes, I would enjoy that."

"Now let me tell you something, my man; these fellows are not animated by as noble motives as you think they are; what they are after is the reward."

"They are justified."

"Certainly; but it's a matter of business, a sort of hunting speculation."

"Yes."

"They take their chances."

"Yes."

"Of a dip or so."

"Yes."

"Well, that's what they'll get if they come too close."

"There is one thing I understand better than you," said Gadding.

"And what is that, my good friend?"

"These men."

"Well?"

"They know every foot of the country hereabouts; they are all regular hunters, their dogs are well trained."

"All right."

"They will follow us day in and day out."

"And what do you propose? Shall we surrender at once?"

"Yes; unless you will make me a promise. Yes, you must make me a promise right here."

"Well, what shall I promise?"

"You must promise me that under no circumstances will we take the life of one of our pursuers, otherwise we will separate right here."

"And would you let them kill you?"

"I rather they would kill me than that I should kill one of them."

"Well, well, you are a nice man to be hunted as a criminal; but, see here, you need not fear, I'll agree to surrender rather than kill one of those men."

"I have your word?"

"Yes."

"Now, mind, I am willing to go into any other game, because, like you, I recognize that our capture is a speculation with those fellows—they are hunting us for the reward."

"That is just what they are doing."

"And we have a right to escape if we can."

"You won't mind, if it comes necessary, if we give one or two of them a gentle 'thump' on the head?"

"No; I will help you do that."

"You would actually knock one of them down?"

"Yes; rather than be taken; in fact, I'll go to any length save the shedding of blood."

"Then we must hit them in the eye and not in the nose."

"Why?"

"Well, the one would only make a blue mark, while the other sort of whack might shed a little blood."

Bardie had just spoken when an immense hound made a leap over the fence and sprang at them.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"WELL, we'll have a little shedding of blood, or a little 'thumping,' as you call it, now, said our hero, as, with a savage bark, the immense hound sprang toward them.

Bardie O'Conor was a magnificent specimen of physical manhood. He was in strength a giant, and a practiced athlete, and as the dog leaped toward him he invited the animal to attack, and then struck with his clinched fist a powerful blow that sent the beast rolling over and over, causing him to yelp like a cur. Bardie followed up his advantage, and kicked the dog again and again, so that when the animal got on his feet he bounded away, yelping and howling with terror.

"Well, that's encouraging!" said our hero.

"You're a powerful man," said Gadding.

"I've a good bit of muscle—yes, and I reckon I'll be trying it on one of our pursuers before morning if they come too close. But now it's time to change our course."

"What do you propose?"

"We will strike off here to the right; we will plunge through to the other side of that clump of trees, and steal along the meadow back toward the point from where we started."

"That is a good scheme. One would think you were an old hunter," said Gadding.

"Well, I've had a little experience at being hunted," was Bardie's ready response.

"If we do as you say those men may pass us."

"That's the idea; and when they return this way again we will resume our walk."

"I've a suggestion to offer."

"Let's have it."

"We will cross their track in the rear?"

"Well?"

"And then run along parallel with them, and if we once reach the cliffs we may lay low until to-morrow night. But one thing you must bear in mind, there will be a hundred men on our track by morning, and they will scour every foot of ground in the county."

"All right, let 'em scour. If we make a day's sleep on them we can take the chances for another night."

"You're right; it's freedom still if we are hunted."

"And it will be freedom to the end," said Bardie; "for we'll never be taken."

"I fear you may forget your promise."

"You need have no fear. I always keep my word when I can, and I'll invent an excuse for breaking it now."

The two men executed their little scheme. They crossed the fence and felt that they were all right, a few moments later, from a little hillock, they saw their pursuers with lanterns moving along the road, and they saw them advance to the point where the encounter with the hound had taken place.

"They are running ahead with a rush," said Bardie, "and I reckon we are all right."

Even as our hero spoke, however, the men came to a halt.

"There were seven of them, and as the night was still and calm the two fugitives could hear the voices of the party as they talked with each other, and a moment later they heard again an appalling sound under all the circumstances, for a second time there came the deep bay of a hound."

"They have set the hound after us again," said Gadding.

"It's another dog," corrected Bardie, adding: "the hound I thumped will never chase man again."

"Did you kill him?"

"No; but I've killed his pluck. He's learned a lesson, and dogs profit more from lessons than men do, as a rule."

The men still watched, when they saw the party strike their trail across the fence, and start once again directly on the track.

"By George, they're after us!"

"They are, and I told you they understood their business."

"The dog has found our trail."

"Yes."

"We will settle him."

"We are too close; we must gain more ground."

"That's all right; but see here, I've a better idea."

"What is your idea?"

"We settled one dog?"

"Yes."

"And there is another on our track?"

"Yes."

"Let's settle the men."

"What do you mean?"

"There are but seven of them."

"Well?"

"We will lay low, let them come up, and then make a rush on them and lay them out."

"They are all armed."

"They are?"

"Yes."

"And would they shoot us down?"

"They would."

"We can shoot as well as they."

"You forget your promise."

"No, I was but suggesting an idea. Well, let's go; we'll fix the dog, however."

"If you serve him as well as you did the first one, we can shake off our pursuers for the night."

"All right, I'll attend to Mr. Doggy, you bet."

The two men ran very fast, and soon discovered that the dog was gaining on them.

"We can wait for him here," said Bardie.

The two men came to a halt, and a moment later the dog was upon them, and there commenced a regular fight between the furious animal and our hero. The latter came out victor, and left the dog dead upon the ground.

"He'll never chase mortal man again, that is sure," said Bardie.

"Yes, you have fixed him."

"I have."

The two men started off at a rapid gait. For during the time the contest had been going on with the dog the pursuers had gained on the fugitives.

Gadding and Bardie again doubled on their tracks and made toward the distant cliffs. And it was just in the gray of the morning when they arrived at the base of a towering precipice.

Our hero was quite a mountaineer, and with the brightening light he walked along until he came to a place where he halted, and said:

"We will climb here."

Gadding looked up and said:

"Mortal man will never climb that cliff without a ladder."

"Do you think so?"

"I do."

"Well, we must climb it. Our pursuers will come to the same conclusion as yourself, and that's where we will be safe, old man."

"Can you climb that cliff, do you think?"

"I can; and I'll take you up with me; and now, my good fellow, here goes."

CHAPTER XLIV.

BARDIE was a wonderful athlete, and, making a spring, he caught on to a ledge, and drew himself upward, and soon gained a firm footing on a broader ledge still higher up; and when he had succeeded thus far he drew two large handkerchiefs from his pocket, knotted them together, and, letting them swing down, he said:

"Now, my good fellow, you catch hold there, and I'll soon have you beside me."

Gadding hesitated a moment. It looked to him like a very perilous undertaking, as Bardie had but a foothold at best.

"It's risky," he said.

"Well, leave the risk to me."

"You can not draw me up."

"If I don't I'll pull myself down, and in that way I'll have my idea or you'll have yours. Come, we'll try it!"

Gadding caught hold of the handkerchief.

"Now, then; hang fast like a Trojan!"

"All right!"

"Put your feet in the clefts and draw yourself up. Do not fear for me; I'll hold you," said Bardie; "I've a good brace."

To Gadding's real astonishment, he was assisted up as though he had been a feather, and in a moment he stood beside our hero on the ledge.

"I'll tell you one thing," said our hero; "if you only accomplish that which is easy, you will not make much progress in the world. You must attempt that which is seemingly difficult, and demonstrate that the feat is easy."

"But how will we get higher? Here we are but more plainly exposed."

"We'll make the whole of a seemingly very difficult job an easy one, and here goes."

Bardie ascended like a monkey over an apparently smooth surface to a ledge still higher up the face of the cliff, and, repeating the former feat, drew Gadding up after him.

"How will we ever get down again?" asked Gadding.

"It will be easier to go down than it has been to come up, as you will learn when we get ready to go down."

Practicing the same tactics, our hero ascended three quarters of the distance up the face of the cliff and drew his companion after him, and at length both men found themselves on a projecting ledge upon which they could move around quite readily, and Bardie found a fissure in the side of the cliff, and penetrating a short distance he came to quite a large opening.

"Here we are as comfortable as though we were in the upper room of a great castle."

"Yes; but we are only temporarily safe."

As Gadding spoke there sounded an ominous sound, a sort of loud rattle.

"By George!" cried our hero, "here's the lord of the castle asking us what we are doing here!"

Gadding, who was a brave man ordinarily, turned deadly pale, and his form trembled with terror.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Bardie.

"It's a rattler."

"So I hear."

"You do not understand."

"Don't I?"

"No; or you would tremble as I am trembling. It's a snake; the most deadly serpent on earth."

Gadding spoke, betraying at the same time all the evidences of intense physical terror.

"I know it's a snake."

"And do you know what a rattler is?"

"I do."

"We have struck right into a nest of them. We had better get out. I would rather throw myself headlong down the cliff."

"You would?"

"I would."

"And it's afraid you are of this frisky worm?"

Gadding stood and gazed aghast, when Bardie said:

"Do not be afraid, my boy: it's only one fellow, and we'll soon settle him. We came where he is, they will never come where we are, do you mind?"

Bardie had stepped to the ledge, followed by Gadding, who was glad to get out in the daylight once more, and the sweat was rolling down his face, great globules being forced through the pores of his skin by his terror.

Bardie cut a switch, and taking one of the silk handkerchiefs, he fixed the handkerchief upon it and re-entered the cavern, and by aid of a candle he discovered the position of the dangerous reptile, and saw that it was ready to spring, and spring it did; but the intrepid man was prepared, and proved that indeed he had seen a rattler before. The snake sprang at the silk handkerchief and buried its fangs in the silk, and our hero coolly dispatched it, and he carried the dead snake outside, showed it to Gadding, and said:

"There, old man, we've killed the lord of the castle, and we can take possession."

"There are more of them in there."

"Did you see more than one?"

"I did not, but there must be a nest of them."

"You need have no fear, but I'll investigate."

Bardie re-entered the cavern, and with a stick he had prepared, he poked in every nook and corner, and at length came forth and said:

"There are no more of them. And now listen, we're all right; we are perfectly safe. A snake will only bite when he is cornered. You go where he is, and he'll spring; but he will not seek a human being. We have got rid of this fellow, and there are no more of them. We are all right."

He at length persuaded his companion to enter the cave, which, after all, was but a fissure in the rocks.

Gadding was at first very nervous, but at length his nervousness wore off under the absolute coolness and courage and indifference of our hero.

The sun came out warm, and the men were very comfortable. They eat a good meal, and Bardie said:

"Now, I propose to go to sleep."

"So would I," said Gadding, "but I dare not."

"You dare not?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"The snakes."

"Well, I'll go to sleep, and you watch for the snakes, and if one of them comes let me know. After I've had a good sleep I'll stay awake and let you take a snooze. Remember, we may stay here a day or two, at least as long as our provisions hold out, and while we're here our friends below can carry on the search."

Bardie did soon fall asleep, and slept as peacefully as a child, and had been asleep, as he afterward found, about two hours, when he was aroused by his companion. Springing up and rubbing his eyes, he demanded:

"What's the matter?"

"We have been tracked!" came the answer.

CHAPTER XLV.

Bardie answered coolly:

"That's all right; I expected we would be; but how did you learn we have been tracked?"

"Listen."

Bardie did listen, and he heard voices, and there came a satisfied look to his face as he once more said:

"That's all right."

Gadding betrayed considerable nervousness, but our hero was as calm as a May morning, and after a moment he said:

"I'll take a peep."

"What will you do?"

"Take a look at them."

"They will see you and we will surely be taken."

"If they see me they have good eyes, and are well entitled to the view. Now you just lie quietly here where you are and leave the matter to me, and if you see a snake while I am gone just choke him quietly and without noise."

Bardie got down at full length and crept forward, and had he been an old hunter he could not have moved with greater skill and caution under all the circumstances. When he reached the opening upon the ledge he crawled in a lateral direction until he came to an opening or smaller crevice in the face of the cliff, and into the latter he crawled and then rose to his feet, and through a little cleft on a level with his head he looked down, and there, sure enough, were five of the seven men who were originally upon his track.

Bardie had a good view of the men, and could plainly overhear every word that passed between them, as they did not speak in whispers but in loud tones.

One said:

"It's a mystery to me where those fellows could have gone."

"We appear to have lost the trail here," remarked another.

Bardie was glad to overhear the last observation, as it fully justified his wisdom in climbing the face of the cliff.

"They could not have climbed the cliff," said still another of the pursuers.

"That is certain, no man could ascend the face of that cliff unless he had wings," observed one of the first speakers.

"Well, there is where you are wrong, my friend," whispered Bardie, adding, "but stick to your opinion, old man; yes, stick to your opinion; I'll not dispute it now."

"It's funny we have lost the trail," said the member of the party who appeared to be a sort of leader. "I never saw a trail so completely wiped out. We can't tell which way they went, whether north, south, east or west."

"They must be 'lying low' somewhere near," suggested one of the party; "I wish we had our dogs."

"They settled our dogs soon enough."

"They did."

The men scattered in several directions, and a regular search commenced.

Bardie had heard enough for the time being, and was well satisfied. He crawled back to the cavern, and said to Gadding:

"Well, old man, my wisdom has been fully justified."

"How?"

"We are safe."

"How do you know?"

"Well, I've an idea that way, and we're safe all the same."

"You do not know these men."

"I've no desire to make their acquaintance at present."

"But why are you so confident?"

"I'll tell you; I overheard them talking."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"And what did they say?"

"They admitted among themselves that they had lost the trail."

"Temporarily."

"Well, that's all right."

"They will find it."

"Will they?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"It is evident they are regular trail hunters."

"You think so?"

"I do."

"Well, they said no man could climb these cliffs without wings. We climbed them, and here we are as safe as a fat in his hole."

"But they will ferret us out."

"Not to-day, honey. They are searching for us down below; they have dismissed the cliff idea from their minds."

"I trust you are all right."

"I feel so confident that I think I will take another nap; and if you want rest, like a sensible man you will follow my example."

"I dare not."

"All right. Ta-ta, for a little while."

Bardie was soon fast asleep once more, and had slept about an hour and a half, as he learned afterward, when he was again aroused by his companion.

"Well, what now?" asked our hero.

"We are surely tracked now!"

"We are?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"Listen."

"To what?"

"Voices. Do you not hear them?"

Bardie did listen, and he did hear voices.

"They are right near us," said Gadding.

Bardie listened more attentively, and a smile radiated his fine face.

"Yes, they are quite near."

"They are in the cavern."

"Not much."

"But hear their voices."

"I do."

"They are right upon us!"

"No, they are right over us; they have ascended the cliff."

"And they have found us?"

"Well, we will just speak in whispers. We can hear them; we do not want them to hear us; but we are all right, and I reckon I'll just take a look."

"Do not move."

"You have lost your nerve, old man."

"Do not imperil our chances."

"Then you admit we are really discovered?"

"They are very near us. They have a suspicion when they have trailed down so closely."

"Well, I wish to know just how closely they have trailed us."

"What will you do?"

"Ask you to lay low here and watch the snakes."

"If you are seen we are lost."

"I am not seen yet."

"Please do not leave here. You are a brave man, but you will overdo it."

"Gadding, it's always a good idea to know the intended movements of your enemies, and I wish to learn just how much those men know, and just what they are up to, that's all."

"You will take great chances."

"That is what men in our positions will have to do, that's all. Now you just 'lay low' and look for snakes, and I will look for the fellows who are looking for us."

Bardie moved forward along the cavern, taking a course deeper into the heart of the rock.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Bardie moved along cautiously until he came to a place where the rent in the mass of rock was very narrow, and then he looked upward and could see daylight.

"I reckon I can work my way up here," he said, and he commenced to worm up through the streak of daylight overhead, and he soon arrived to within a few feet of the top, when he came to a halt and listened.

He could plainly hear the voices of the men, and he could also hear the crackling of a fire.

"By ginger!" he muttered, "the fellows have started a camp. I've half a mind to crawl out and interview them."

A moment he considered, and then worked his way back to the cavern. Gadding was anxiously awaiting his return.

"What did you discover?"

"The fellows have started a camp right over our heads."

"Then they know we are somewhere near, and they have a scheme."

"They are not the only fellows who can scheme, and I've got a little scheme in my head, and I'm going to carry it out."

"What will you do?"

Bardie commenced putting on a change of garb.

"You are going out to meet them?"

"See here, Gadding, do not attempt to advise me. I am one of those fellows who always demands his own way."

"But what is your game?"

"I'm going to throw those fellows off our track."

"Why not lay low here?"

"That will be all right in one sense; but I've another idea; I think I can do more effective work. We may shake these fellows only to have a fresh gang on our track. Now, I want to break this trail. We want to go west, and we do not need to have any one on our track. If we once shake these fellows the right way we can move on at our leisure. I do not wish to leave the shadow of a trail."

Bardie got himself up as an old man, a very feeble old man, and bidding Gadding "lay low" and not move away under any circumstances, he retired and crawled back to where the cliff narrowed, and then commenced to work his way up, and all the time, as the width of the cavern would permit, he worked away from the point where the men were encamped, and soon he arrived within a few feet of the surface when he stopped and listened.

He could hear the voices of the men but very indistinctly, and he knew that they were some distance away, and he crawled up and stood on the ground above.

A moment he looked around. He saw the smoke of the fire of the men, and making a detour he came up toward them from a westerly direction, and was soon observed by them.

The men all leaped to their feet, but Bardie advanced directly toward them.

"Good-day," he said, as he approached.

The men looked him over, and our hero asked:

"What are you fellows doing here?"

"Hunting. What are you doing here?"

"I'm hunting, also."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"What are you hunting?"

"I'm hunting for two men."

"Hunting for two men?"

"Yes."

"What sort of men?"

Bardie described himself and Gadding as they appeared when first discovered by the men with the lanterns at the station.

"You're hunting for those two men?"

"Yes, I am."

The pursuers looked in each other's faces.

"Why are you hunting for them?"

The pretended old man laughed, and said:

"Because I want to find them."

"Yes, I do."

"And you're hunting them alone?"

"Yes, I am; why not?"

"You're a pretty brave man."

"I am, eh?"

The old man laughed in a hearty manner, and said:

"You fellows talk kinder queer. What's the matter with you?"

"And you're really hunting for those two men whom you have described?"

"Yes, I am."

"You've seen them before?"

"I should say I had."

"Where?"

"In New York."

"You saw them in New York?"

"Yes, I did."

"When?"

"A few days ago."

"What do you mean, old man?"

"Just what I say; but I don't understand what you fellows mean. Have you seen those men?"

"Suppose we have?"

"If you have, tell me in what direction."

"You know those men?"

"I don't know much about them—no. All I know is, I engaged them for the winter."

"You engaged them for the winter?"

"I did."

"For what purpose?"

"To work for me cutting trees and hauling stone."

Again the men looked in each other's faces.

"Did you really engage those men?"

"Certainly I did. Was there any harm in it, or anything unusual in hiring two men? I went to York a week ago and hired those men. They were to follow in two days, and I was to meet them at New Paltz. I went down there, and heard the men had arrived last night, and they started for my house; but later on I learned that they had lost their way, and had been seen somewhere below, making their way to the mountains in this direction, and some one told me that they were being hunted as two thieves. Poor fellows, some one has scared the life out of them."

Again the men looked in each other's faces.

"Have you seen anything of them?" asked the pretended old man.

"Yes; we saw them."

"When?"

"Last night."

"Where?"

"On the road."

"Which way were they heading?"

"We did not notice particularly."

"The poor fellows may get lost in the woods and may starve to death. But good-day, I must get around and see if I can not strike their trail; they must be somewhere in this vicinity."

The pretended old man moved away, and the smart hunters sat a moment in silence.

They were really countrymen, and in their way pretty shrewd men, but in other directions, for lack of experience, they were not up to "snuff," as the saying goes. They did not appear for one moment to doubt the statements of the old man, nor did they deem it really necessary to ask him any questions concerning himself. He was so well got up they accepted the theory at once that he was a mountain farmer, and it began to steal over their minds that they had been chasing and frightening two innocent farm hands, and they felt correspondingly flat.

CHAPTER XLVII.

It was some time before the self-constituted leader spoke, and then he said:

"I guess we've been 'too fresh.'"

"It looks so."

"We've been chasing and frightening two innocent immigrants."

"That's what's the matter."

"I'm bothered," said one of the men.

"What bothers you?"

"If those fellows were two innocent immigrants they were the smartest pair of greenies I ever came across. They beat any men I ever saw in spoiling a trail."

"By George, you're right, there is something in that; but the old farmer described the men to a nicety."

"He did. He's all right; but he engaged them in York, and may be he's been fooled."

"That would be all right; but the two fellows we thought we were after started out from Poughkeepsie after fooling a pair of detectives."

"That's so, and these fellows fooled us after tossing Hans in the creek."

"It's queer, I tell you."

"You bet it's queer, and, come to think, there is something queer about that old farmer."

Bardie had got back into his crevice, and he had crawled along toward the point where the men were. He had the bearings, and he got close enough to overhear all that passed.

When the man suggested there was something queer about the old farmer it began to run through the heads of the whole five men that indeed it was queer, very queer.

"Where did that old fellow come from, anyhow?" suggested one of the men.

"And it's odd he should have struck us right here, and have the appearance of those men down so fine."

"You're right; I propose we look up that old fellow."

"Two of you go and bring him back. We will ask him a few questions about himself."

Two of the men started off, and the others continued to talk, while Bardie muttered:

"Hang them; they have 'tumbled;' they won't find the old man, for here he is." The fugitive struck his own chest. "And then their suspicions will be more and more aroused, and hang it, I do not know as I've done a good thing, after all, but I meant well, and played it nicely, too; but hang them, they've got something through their heads, after all."

The three men who remained continued to talk. The leader said:

"Bother my stupidity, but I never dreamed about anything being wrong, but the more I think it over the more strange it appears to me."

"Strange; you bet it's strange. Where did that farmer come from, eh?"

"We'll know, for he can't be very far away."

"I'll go and help hunt him up," said another of the men.

"Yes, go along and compel him to come back. We'll make him explain and find out who he is, anyhow."

"You'll not make him explain to-day," muttered Bardie, with a quiet smile upon his fine face.

"By ginger!!" again exclaimed the leader, "those fellows were too smart to be ignorant immigrants."

"They were too smart for us, that's certain."

"They dropped us off their trail mighty easy."

"They did."

"Well, we'll know in a few moments; the old man could not have got far away. He can't throw us off his trail. We've got him sure, and we'll know who he is."

"I reckon he's thrown you off his trail," muttered Bardie, adding, "and won't you fellows be bothered and mad in less than half an hour."

Bardie's prediction proved correct, as within a few moments one of the men who had gone as one of the first two returned with a perplexed look upon his face, and said:

"Well, it's queer."

"What has occurred?"

"That old man was a ghost."

"A ghost?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"He has vanished into thin air."

"Nonsense."

"We can not find hide nor hair of him. There is not a crushed bush anywhere around."

"Did you halloo?"

"No."

"Oh, you will find him. Let's all set up a halloo."

The men began to shout, and there came an answering shout; but it was from their own companions.

"That's right, my friends, shout," muttered Bardie; "but you may shout until you are sick. You'll never get an answer from the ghost."

All hands scattered, and started on a search for the mysterious old man. Indeed, no more than three minutes had passed since the search for him had commenced, and indeed he had vanished as though he had gone into thin air.

Bardie maintained his position a few moments, and then worked down to where he had left his comrade.

"You are back?"

"I am."

"I thought you were a goner."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"Because you heard them start?"

"Yes."

Bardie laughed.

"Who were they hallooting for?"

"Me."

"Then they saw you?"

"I had a long talk with them."

"You did?"

"I did."

Bardie told his story.

"You have got nerve."

"I thought I'd send them off our track, and I would have succeeded were it not for one fellow who was smarter than the others."

"And now they suspect you?"

"Well, I reckon that's about the size of it."

"And they will know we are in the neighborhood."

"So it appears now."

"They will lay low for us."

"Let 'em lay! We have enough to eat for a day or two; we have all the water we want—good, clear water, dripping through the rents in the rock. We're all right!"

While talking Bardie had removed his disguise.

"What will you do?"

"We will make ourselves comfortable, of course."

"They are sure to find us."

"Not this evening—some other evening, possibly."

"You take the 'cup,' Bardie O'Conor."

"That's all right, as long as those fellows do not take us."

"They'll get us, in the end."

"About the time the undertaker is looking for us—not sooner—and then it don't matter who gets us, old man; but I wish to hear more that they may have to say."

"You will take the last risk, I am afraid."

"Well, as long as it is you alone who indulges fear, we are all right; I am never afraid; I never permit myself to be afraid—and so, here goes!"

Bardie had changed his clothes, and started once again for his eyrie in the crevice to listen."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

WHEN Bardie got back to his eyrie, he discovered that the men had not returned from their search; but after a moment one man did return, and seated himself near the camp-fire. Our hero waited a few moments and then his propensity to joke prevailed over his sense of prudence. He muttered:

"I'll give that fellow a scare."

He worked down again to the cavern and assumed an entirely different disguise from the one he had assumed when he appeared as the old man. He worked the transform in a few moments, and quickly got back to his eyrie. He glanced out and saw that the solitary watcher was still near the camp-fire. Bardie stole forth, ran quickly around, and approached the man. The latter leaped to his feet with a startled cry, but in a moment recovered his self-command, and demanded:

"Where did you come from?"

"How long have you been around here?" asked Bardie.

"What difference does that make to you?"

"I want to ask you a question."

"Well, ask it."

"Have you seen an old man around here?"

"What sort of a looking man?"

Bardie described himself as he had appeared in the rôle of the old man.

"Are you looking for that old man?"

"Yes; and you've seen him?"

"Well, yes, I did see an old man."

"Where is he?"

"I don't know now where he is, but who is the old fellow?"

"My father."

"Your father?"

"Yes."

"Is he lost?"

"I am afraid he is. You see, we hired a couple of men in York to work; the men came up and were lost, as the old man thought, and he started out to look for them; but it's all right."

The listener stared, and exclaimed:

"It's all right?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"The men have arrived at our place."

"What sort of looking men were they?"

Our hero gave the same description of himself and companion as he had given before.

"And you engaged those men?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In York."

"What for?"

"To cut wood and carry stone."

"And they have turned up?"

"Yes."

"Why did they not turn up sooner?"

"The poor fellows were scared. A lot of them thought they were thieves and chased them, and they reached our farm almost frightened to death. But now I want to find the old man, as he will go traveling all over the mountains looking for them."

"You wait here a moment."

"No, I must look for the old man."

"But I think he'll be here in a moment. He was here a few moments ago."

"He was?"

"Yes."

"All right; I'll wait and see if he comes back."

The hunter meantime had walked away, and he fired his gun as a signal, and Bardie quietly sneaked away, and once more leaped down in his crevice and took a position in his eyrie.

He had just reached there when the man to whom he had been talking returned to the camp-fire, accompanied by two other men.

The three men looked around, and one of them asked:

"Where is he?"

The first man shouted, but there came no answer.

"By George! he has gone."

"We can find him anyhow."

"How long ago was it since he was here?"

"Not more than three minutes."

All hands started to look for apparition number two, but they could find no trace of him, and when they returned to the camp-fire all hands were assembled, and the man told his story.

"There is something very funny about all this," said the leader.

"I should say there was," remarked another of the men.

"It's a mystery where that old man went to, I am sure."

"And it's a greater mystery where the young man went to," said the fellow who had met our hero.

"Have you been dreaming, Tom?" came the question.

"I have not; I do not sleep in the day-time."

"And you really saw and talked with a man right here?"

"I did."

"And three minutes later started to look for him, and could not find him?"

"Three of us started to look for him, and could not find him."

"It's all very odd."

"It is."

"You say he said the old man was his father?"

"Yes."

"And he described the two men?"

"He did."

"And said they were at his farm?"

"Yes."

"Where is his farm?"

"I did not ask him."

"Boys," said the leader, "this is all very mysterious."

"It's more than mysterious."

"Those two men are somewhere near here."

"You do not believe the story?"

"No."

"What do you suspect?"

"I suspect that the two rascals are really trying to throw us off their track."

"But where are they and why wouldn't we recognize them?"

"Those fellows have a way of changing their appearance. I've always heard that, and they've played the change game on us."

"But where are they?"

"That's the question; but one thing is certain, they are somewhere near here."

The man brought down the point of a stick he carried in his hand, and added:

"They are within a couple of hundred feet of the end of that stick at this moment."

"But where?"

"That's the question; if we had a dog we'd soon find out where they are."

"Can they be in one of the crevices?"

"We can search."

"Hallo!" ejaculated Bardie. "I reckon Gadding was right. I've carried the thing too far, but I've got out of this and sent them a chase."

Bardie was a splendid runner, and he was well trained, and he quite foreshadowed a short distance, and sent forth a halloo, and then he made a

detour, and ran so as to come around to a spot from where he would have a view of the fire. The men had all disappeared, and our hero muttered:

"I reckon I've fooled them again."

CHAPTER XLIX.

BARDIE GOT BACK to his eyrie, and listened, and fully half an hour passed, and the men returned one after the other to the camp-fire, and when all were assembled one of them said:

"I've had enough of this; I propose to make my way home."

Another said:

"That's my idea to a dot. We're being fooled, that's all."

The leader did not like the idea of the men giving up, and he urged them to hang on, as he put it, but the men made a start, and only three remained. After a few minutes one of the three said:

"I think I'll go home."

The leader again sought to urge the man; but he persisted, and started after his companions.

"Let them go," said the leader, "we will see those fellows, and get the whole reward. I tell you they are somewhere around here."

"And suppose they are?"

"We will find 'em."

"And suppose we do?"

"Well?"

"Do you suppose you and I can capture two desperate fellows like them?"

"Why not?"

"They're well armed."

"So are we."

"But they'll shoot."

"So can we."

"All right, I'm off. I've no stomach to tackle two such men. If the whole party was here it would be easy, but you and I alone could never take 'em."

"Are you going?"

"I am."

"Well then, there's no use for me to stay."

It was well in the afternoon when the last of the five men moved away from the camp-fire.

Bardie determined to make sure that it was not a scheme. He crawled forth and followed the two last men. He saw them find a trail down the cliff and start to descend, when he ran forward and secured a position from whence he could see them down to the valley, and to the valley he saw them descend, and he muttered:

"It's all right."

Our hero had returned to the corner. He had been away two hours, and he found Gadding anxiously awaiting his return.

"They have gone," said Bardie.

"Gone where?"

"To their homes. We're all right."

Bardie told his story.

"Well, you are a risky sort of a chap."

"I've discouraged them, anyhow."

"It may be a little scheme."

"Is it? There they go filing down the valley. We're all right."

"And now what is your scheme?"

"I mean to remain here as long as our provisions hold out."

"You mean to remain here?"

"If you are not afraid of the snakes, yes."

Bardie went out through the upper crevice, and gathered some twigs, and returning, set to work and made a fire. He had a couple of tin cups, and he boiled some water and made a cup of coffee, and when night came the two men lay down and went to sleep, and they slept through until morning without being disturbed. They managed to make a good breakfast, and later on Bardie said:

"See here, old man, you like this?"

"I do; it's security."

"That's so, and you must remain here, for I've a little game to carry out."

"What is your game?"

"Two men traveling through the country will be constant objects of suspicion."

"As we will soon have other men on our track, we're bound to be caught sooner or later."

"You talk as though you were used to being caught."

"I've always been captured in the end when they were well and good on my track."

"For once you will be not caught, I say. We're going to make our way West, and after a day or two we can move on easy enough."

"You have a scheme in your head?"

"Yes, a good one."

"What is it?"

"I'll tell you when I come back."

"Where are you going?"

"I'm going off on a little foraging expedition."

"You're bound to be captured."

"Not I."

"Yes."

"Not this evening, some other evening. But listen; they are on the lookout for two men; they will not go for one man."

"They will go for any one who can not give an account of himself."

"It's a very cold day when I can not give an account of myself, honey."

We will here state that Bardie had picked up a great many American slang phrases, and he was very fond of interjecting them when occasion offered.

"All right, old man, I can depend upon you, I know that."

"Yes, you can; I've a big scheme on hand, and I will fix things so we can travel in perfect safety."

"You're a real genius."

"We will see how I come out. I think mine is a good scheme."

While Bardie had been talking he donned the disguise of the old man; but he had changed it very much, so that under ordinary circumstances he could actually have met with safety one of the men whom he had fooled around the camp-fire.

"Now, old man," he said, "you make yourself perfectly comfortable, and do not be afraid if I do not come back in a day or two."

"Do you really mean to leave me here for a day or two?"

"No, that is not my intention; but it is possible I may be compelled to do; it's my idea I'll be back before sundown, and if I do I'll have a good supper for you, and don't you forget it."

Bardie started. It was early in the morning, and the atmosphere was quite crisp. Our hero did not descend to the valley, but took a course over the mountain, and he walked for two hours, moving at times with great difficulty, but taking his bearings as he proceeded. At length he came to a road—a regular mountain road—and he proceeded along the latter until he came to a house located in the middle of a cleared acre. The traveler boldly went up to the house and knocked. A woman came to the door, and he asked:

"Can I buy a cup of milk?"

"Who are you?"

"I'm a peddler."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"Where's your pack?"

"I left it down the road. I got lost, and I've traveled along without it, looking for a house."

"You must have passed several houses on your way up the mountain."

"I came across the mountain; I did not come by the road."

"Well, come in," said the woman, and Bardie entered the house.

CHAPTER L.

THE house where Bardie found himself was quite a comfortable place; the woman was a shrewd and very thrifty looking female. She brought him a glass of milk, and asked if he would like to have a cup of coffee.

"I will not put you to much trouble," said Bardie.

"Oh, I have some I can heat again in a moment."

"All right, if it's no trouble."

The woman gave him a pretty good meal. She had evidently made up her mind that he was an honest man. She was quite a talkative woman also, he discovered, as she said:

"I expect my husband back to-day."

"Is he away?"

"Yes, he's been away since day before yesterday, and all the time I've been frightened out of my life."

"How so?"

"There is a story going around that there are two noted desperadoes hiding on the mountain, and the men around the country here are on the lookout day and night, and they keep them quite busy all the time."

"Well, I should think you would be afraid."

"I am; but I've kept my husband's gun ready all the time, and I've two boys, good strong fellows, one sixteen and the other one fourteen."

"And where are they now?"

"They go to school this time of the year;

they're at school now; but I wish you had brought your pack. What do you sell?"

"All kinds of dry-goods and fancy articles when I have a good stock, but I'm pretty well sold out, you see. I bring a stock into the country and sell it there. I buy up all the old clothes I can to carry back."

"You buy up old clothes?"

"Yes."

"What do you do with them?"

"It depends upon what kind of old clothes they are. I can use almost anything, and I pay pretty good prices, you see. Some of the clothes, when they are pretty good, we ship south to sell to the negroes, and others we sell to showmen and the like. Oh, we have no difficulty in selling all we can get."

"You have to buy pretty good clothes."

"Oh, no, I buy anything in the shape of old gowns, old hats, and the like."

"May be I've got some to sell."

"I'm afraid I can not buy any more. I've bought quite a lot; but I will be up in this country again, after I've been down to Paltz and shipped what I've got."

"Do you trade or pay cash?"

"It makes no difference to me. I trade or pay cash just as it suits the other person."

"I've got a lot of old duds."

"Well, when I come by here again I will look at them."

"You might look at them now and see if they are worth anything."

"It will do when I come this way again."

"You need not buy; you can look at them. See if they are worth anything."

"Well, I'll look at them."

The woman left the room, and was gone some time, but at length she re-entered it with an armful of female apparel as old-fashioned as the hills, as the ladies say.

"These duds are pretty good," said the woman; "they used to belong to my husband's first wife, who died over ten years ago."

"I thought you had two sons of your own?"

"Ah, you see, the father of my boys died, and after I had been a widow five years I married my present husband."

"Ah, I see."

The woman set down her bundle, and commenced sorting it over, and our hero's eyes glistened. He was just delighted. If he desired to have had a list of old things made to order he could not have found an assortment that really suited him better.

There were old shoes, stockings, hats and gowns, and indeed the complete outfit of an old-fashioned countrywoman.

"You see, these things are pretty good, but I've no use for them."

"And do you want to sell them?"

"Yes, I do."

"I'd like to buy them, but I've got such a pack down on the road."

"I might send them down the valley for you."

Our hero dickered and hemmed and hawed for some time, and in the end he bought the whole mass of goods. When the bargain was completed and paid for he bought a loaf of home-made bread, a roll of butter, and also got a bottle of milk, and then purchased a chicken, and after two hours spent at the woman's house he took his departure, carrying his bundle. The woman was well pleased in getting anything for the old "duds," as she called them, and our hero was still better pleased in having secured them.

It was a toilsome journey back to the crevice, but in due time Bardie reached his eyrie, and found his comrade awaiting him.

"What have you there?" demanded Gadding.

"Well, I'll let you into my secret by and by, but the fact is I've been shopping. It wasn't exactly a fashionable shopping trip."

"I should say it wasn't," exclaimed Gadding as Bardie unrolled his purchases. "It was a regular old-fashioned shopping trip."

Both men laughed, and Bardie set to work to broil his chicken over the embers of the fire Gadding had preserved. The men made an excellent meal, and just as the sun went down settled to their pipes and tobacco, for Bardie had secured a supply of both.

"This is just cozy," said our hero.

"It's real comfort," said Gadding. "I tell you, a feeling of security to a man who has been chased and hounded as I have been, is something most people can not understand. But let's know what your plans are, Bardie."

"You don't 'catch on,' eh?"

"I do not."

"What do you suppose I've bought all those women's clothes for?"

"I've an idea."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"Well, what is your idea?"

"They are for a disguise."

"You're right. You will be the daughter, and I'll be the mother; or shall we be a pair of maiden sisters?"

Both men again laughed heartily, and Gadding said:

"I see it all now."

"Well, what's your verdict?"

"It's a good scheme."

"But what shall we be?"

"How do you mean?"

"Shall it be mother and daughter or two maiden sisters?"

"Two maiden sisters, by all means, as we will be so near of a size, and we will make 'daisies.'"

"We will."

Again the men laughed.

"Don't you think it's a big scheme?"

"It's immense."

"Well, all right, we'll get to work and make our wigs."

CHAPTER LI.

BOTH men were very skillful, and they set to work to make proper disguises. Our hero had explained to Gadding his plan, and the latter was well pleased.

The men worked until far into the night, as Bardie had obtained candles, and it was a really strange and weird scene when those two tall fellows donned their female attire. They looked odd and grotesque enough.

"How are you, sister?" said Bardie.

Gadding laughed. Mimicking a staid old maid, he answered:

"I'm a little fatigued and sleepy, sister."

The two men had quite a merry time in that lonely cavern way up on the very face of the cliff.

"What do you think of our chances for getting out West now?"

"I think our chances have improved; but we will attract a great deal of attention traveling about through the country."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes. It is a good scheme, but we will still be objects of suspicion."

"That is if we travel afoot."

"Yes."

"We will not travel afoot."

"How will we get a vehicle?"

"We will buy one—an old-fashioned affair—somewhere on the hill-side westward."

"You will buy one?"

"Certainly. Did you think I would steal it?"

"But where will the money come from?"

"I have the money."

"You have money?"

"Yes, plenty of money."

Bardie had not told of his good fortune in receiving money from the man he had saved from the wreck, nor of his lucky stock speculation, so he proceeded and unfolded his tale.

"Well, you are a lucky fellow—a regular Monte-Cristo."

"I reckon I'll have to set up as a Monte-Cristo, for I've been often accused of being one."

"I begin to have hopes."

"Well, you may. My luck will carry us through. Let us stick together and we'll strike a fortune, old man, and when we do I'll see that you are relieved of all the criminal judgments against you. Indeed, you are entitled to a fair start in life, and you shall have it, old man."

"My meeting with you was a good stroke of luck."

"I trust it will turn out so."

The two men lay down to sleep, and they slept well and long, as the sun was shining high and clear upon the following morning when they awoke. They set to work and prepared a good breakfast, and Gadding remarked:

"This experience will be a pleasant recollection the rest of my life, even though I live to be as old as Tom Ording, and he lived to see his one hundred and tenth birthday anniversary."

"He lived to be pretty old," said Bardie, "and I trust you may live to be as aged."

"Do we start to-day?" asked Gadding.

"Not to-day; no, possibly not for a week. We must let matters quiet down. The whole country hereabouts is aroused, men are sleeping on their arms; we are safe and comfortable here."

The men remained almost two days in their eyrie. Bardie slipped out, and shot a few rabbits, and they lived pretty well and slept very comfortably.

On the fourth day Bardie proposed that he would take a little tramp and see how the land lay. He got into his disguise as an old woman.

"How do I look?" he asked when ready to go.

"Fine; I am half inclined to fall in love with you."

Bardie made his way up to the top of the mountain, through the crevice, and started forth. He knew the country pretty well, and determined to take a different route from the one he had followed on his former expedition, lest the lady from whom he had purchased the clothes might see him and recognize them.

Bardie, before starting, had told Gadding that he might not be back until the following day.

It was a long tramp before our hero came in sight of a village on the winding slope of the mountain. He had walked for seven hours, and was pretty tired when he entered a hotel down in the valley.

His appearance did not attract as much attention as he had supposed it would. Odd-looking figures are not an unusual sight in the country, as he afterward learned, and he began to see that he and his "pard" would possibly have quite an easy time of it after all.

The landlord of the tavern where he stopped was an old-fashioned man himself, and when Bardie's meal was prepared, the old fellow walked in and took a seat near the table to have a chat.

"What part of the country are you from?" asked the landlord.

Bardie looked at him through his spectacles, and said:

"Don't see as that's your business."

"Halloo! you are on a high horse, eh?"

"Yes, I am always on a high horse when people look for information that don't concern them."

"I beg your pardon, madame; I meant no harm."

"Miss—if you please, sir—miss."

"Oh, I beg pardon again. Surely you must excuse me. I'll go away; but if you want anything, just let me know."

"Are you an honest man?" came the abrupt question.

"I claim to be an honest man, madame."

"Miss, I told you."

"Oh, yes, I mean miss."

"You are not a horse dealer? Do you belong to the church?"

"No, madame; but I go to church once in awhile."

"Miss, I told you."

"I mean miss."

"Please don't call me madame again. If you do you will make me mad, and I'll box your ears for your impudence. I did not come here to be insulted."

"I did not mean to insult you, miss."

"I do not intend that you shall, and it's an insult to call me madame when I'm a miss. Do you think I was ever fool enough to get married—no, sir. I know what gents you men are too well, and I'm too busy to be a married woman."

"Are you in business, miss?"

"Yes, I am."

"What is your business?"

"That's none of your business; but ~~am~~ you a horse jockey?"

"I could be called a horse dealer, mad-a-a-a—miss."

"Yes, miss."

"I have bought and sold horses in my time, miss."

"And you have always cheated the buyer and the seller, I suppose."

"No, miss; I am an honest man."

"If you are, you are one among ten thousand, that's all."

CHAPTER LII.

THE landlord of the hotel was really quite a joker, and he was highly amused with the sayings of his eccentric guest.

"It was tough to be honest when I was young, miss."

"Do you drink?"

"Water—yes."

"But do you drink beer?"

"Sometimes—a little."

"Then you're a fool, and you are on the road to ruin. Are you a married man?"

"I am a widower."

There came a change over the face of the powdered miss. Indeed, Bardie was a wonderful actor. He could have made a fortune on the stage, he had such wonderful control of his face and such facial skill in changing his expressions.

"Ah, you are a widower?"

"Yes, miss."

In a soft and pussy-cat tone our hero said:

"You will excuse my speaking to you in such a harsh manner. I've the kindest heart in the world. Yes, I am full of sympathy and kindness for those who are afflicted. I am a splendid housekeeper. I have a little money saved up, too. I am a splendid cook. I tell you, when the church up in our town has fairs, all the gentlemen go for the pork and beans and fixin's that I send as a contribution. I love to give to church fairs, I do, and they do say if I'd dress a little and spruce up I'd kinder take the shine off of some of the ladies in our place who set themselves up to be very handsome; but really, how I am running on about myself; but you see, I'm a stranger to you, and if I did not say something you wouldn't know who I am. You may be entertaining an angel unawares—that's what our parson calls me when there's nobody around—and you ought to see how sheepish and humble he looks when I rebuke him and tell him to go along and be ashamed of himself."

The landlord grinned all over; but our hero had carried a good point and prepared the way for what he had in view. His take-off of the old maid with hopes was an excellent piece of acting, and disarmed the landlord of all suspicion, and prepared him for what was to come.

"I see you are a mighty fine woman," said the landlord.

"Now see here, you must not commence your compliments. I'm so used to compliments that I'm tired of them. Yes, I like plain, straight talk; but I'm looking for an honest man."

"Do you think of getting married?" put in the landlord.

The play of our hero's face was a marvel, as he demanded:

"Do you mean to insult me?"

"I had no such idea."

"How dare you ask me if I am looking for a husband? Why, I've had a hundred chances to get married. I get an offer about once a week. No, sir, I've no idea of getting married. I know the men too well, I do; but I will say, if the *beau ideal* of my heart should come along in a man whom I could respect as well as love, I don't know what I might say."

"That man may come some day."

"Yes, he may, but I'm not looking for him; when he comes I'll see what he looks like. But you say you are an honest man. Can I trust you?"

The landlord gave a start, and exclaimed, as he turned a little pale:

"Excuse me; I am going to be married in a week."

"See here, mister, don't you make any mistake; it's plain you do not catch what I'm after."

"What are you after, miss?"

"I'm after an honest man."

"I hope you'll find one."

"I hope I will, for I want to buy a horse."

"Eh?" ejaculated the landlord.

"I want to buy a horse, and I want to buy one of an honest man. Now you needn't think I've been setting my cap for you, for I wouldn't marry you if you were the only man left on earth. You men are so conceited, especially you widowers, you think every woman you meet is dying with love for you. Yes, I've seen such fellows before. We've had several widowers in our town. I ain't looking for an honest man because I want a husband; I'm looking for an honest man because I want a horse."

"What kind of a horse do you want?"

"I want a good horse for a very little money."

"Hard to get, miss."

"I want to buy a horse for just what he's worth."

"Do you know anything about horses, miss?"

"More than I do about babies."

"Can you tell a good horse when you see him?"

"I reckon I can."

"Now see here, I'm no horse jockey, but I've a horse to sell—a horse I'll sell cheap."

"Where was he raised?"

"In Orange County; and he's a dandy. Yes he is. I've been offered good money for him."

"How much do you want for him?"

"Well, I'd rather you'd see him first."

"Where is he?"

"In my stable here."

"If I go out to look at him we'll have the whole village around."

"No we won't."

"Can you take me to see that horse with nobody around but you and me, sir?"

"Of course I can."

"When I've done my dinner I'll go and look at the horse."

The landlord was delighted. He was quite an enterprising man in his way, especially when it came to selling or trading a horse.

Bardie finished his dinner and was very deliberate, but when ready, he said:

"Now see here, when I buy a horse I don't want the whole village around, that's the reason I did not buy the horse in our town; everybody knew my old Bess was dead, and everybody had a horse to sell me, and I said to myself if I buy Brown's horse, Smith will be mad, and if I buy Smith's horse, Brown will be mad, and so all the way down the list, and I made up my mind to just steal away, giving out that I was going on a visit, do you see, and when I get back I'll have a horse, in case I find an honest man who has a horse to sell at just about what the animal is worth."

"I've got the horse to suit you, and I'll sell him for just what he's worth."

"There's one thing I want you to understand: you tell me the truth about your horse."

"Oh, I never lied about a horse in my life!"

"You never did?"

"Never!"

"Then you haven't bought and sold many horses, that's all; and I don't think you can have a very good horse, for a man who can't lie in a horse-trade is bound to be fooled; and then he must turn around and look for another fool to help him out."

There came a glitter in the landlord's eyes.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE landlord made up his mind that he had a pretty shrewd woman to deal with. She was an odd-looking piece, a regular old maid as conceived as thunder, as he expressed it, but she was up to snuff.

Bardie had played his part well, as intended. His whole object was to cover his trail and ward off all suspicion. He knew that he had been identified as the companion of Gadding, and he knew that a crafty foe was on his track, and that for reasons, no amount of money would be spared in order to catch him.

The landlord led the guest to his stable and showed him a good horse, seemingly, but he was amazed when he saw the pretended old maid go over the animal.

"By George!" he mentally exclaimed, "she is a daisy!"

"Good in both eyes?" asked Bardie.

"Eyesight perfect," was the response.

"Lead him out."

The man led the horse from the stable, but halted him under a shady tree, and did not permit him to stand in the glare of the sun.

"Kind?" asked Bardie.

"As gentle as a kitten."

"No speed?"

"No; but a good, safe, honest traveler."

"Lead him out here."

The man moved him around and led him out so his head would be away from the direct rays of the sun.

"Lead him this way."

The man obeyed, but he got on one side of the horse, and commenced stroking him, so shading one eye.

"Good eyesight?" again asked our hero.

"Perfect."

"You are sure?"

"Yes."

"Well, let's see. You come here."

The landlord would have led the horse back under the tree, but Bardie seized the halter, pushed the man aside, and made a test of one of the eyes.

"Eyesight good, eh?"

"Perfect."

"You claim to be an honest man, eh?"

"I never lie about a horse."

"You are sure?"

"I tell you the truth."

"How much do you want for that horse?"

"Two hundred."

"Two hundred dollars?"

"Yes."

"And he is sound?"

"Yes."

"See here, sir, if you will make that eye good on the off-side I will give you two hundred, or I will take your horse as he is for one hundred and twenty-five dollars."

The landlord glared.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"No need to waste words; you know what I mean, and you have my offer."

"But is there anything the matter with the animal's eye?"

"You know just what the matter is—yes, you do."

"If there is anything the matter it's news to me."

"It is, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, you have my offer. And now see here; whose wagon is that?"

"Mine."

"Is it for sale?"

"I might sell it."

It was an old buggy on which our hero had cast his eyes.

"How much do you want for that?"

"What will you give for it?"

"I'll give you one hundred and fifty dollars for the horse and wagon and a few sets of harness."

"Say one hundred and seventy-five, and it's a bargain."

"One hundred and sixty?"

"No, I will not take one cent less than one hundred and seventy-five dollars."

"Will you throw in a blanket and a bag of feed and a little hay?"

"You are a screamer, madame."

"Miss, if you please."

"Well, miss, then; you are a screamer."

"Is it a bargain?"

"Yes, it's a bargain."

"Well, hitch up your horse."

"But you have not bought him yet."

"I want to see how he looks in harness."

"Is this to be cash down?"

"Yes."

The horse was hitched up, and looked sorry enough in the old harness and before the old buggy, but it was just what our hero wanted. If he had ordered a turn-out for his purpose he could not have got anything that suited him better.

"How does it suit you?" asked the landlord.

"It will do, because time is money, and it would take time to hunt up a better bargain."

"You never made a better bargain in your life."

"Of course you will say so; and I've no time to dispute it. Come in the house and I will pay you."

They entered the house and the money was paid over; and when the landlord had counted it, he said:

"I wish you were a man."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I'd ask you to have a drink."

"You wicked man, to suggest such a thing; but let me see, you do sell liquor, don't you?"

"I do."

"And you've good whisky?"

"I have the best in this county."

"Now see here; I'm troubled with rheumatism, and sometimes I am compelled to bathe myself with a little whisky, and if you'll sell me a bottle and say nothing about it—"

"Oh, I see, lots of ladies would have the rheumatism," said the landlord with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"I hope you do not think I mean to drink it?"

"Oh, no!"

"But you had a significant smile on your face."

"I was not thinking of you."

"You were not?"

"No."

"What were you thinking of, sir?"

"Those other ladies who buy it for the purpose as yourself."

"You are a very insulting man!"

"No, no; it's just my way, you know."

"Well, go and get the whisky, and if you are mean enough to indulge mean suspicions, I can't help it. There's one thing I will say, I'd rather you'd know than have some of those gossips up in our town know that I was compelled to buy

whisky for my rheumatism; they'd make talk enough of it, sure enough. Yes, go get the whisky."

Had the landlord seen the wink that illuminated Bardie's face for a second, he might have thought the old maid even still shadier than he had dared credit her with being.

The whisky was put in the wagon, the oats and the hay, and after making some inquiries as to how she could make a certain town, one to which she had no intention of going, the pretended old maid bid the landlord good-bye, and she drove away, the man muttered:

"Well, she beats any woman I ever met!"

CHAPTER LIV.

BARDIE had done a good day's business, and was well satisfied. He felt that he and Tom could make a start for the West in perfect safety, and although on their journey they would probably attract a great deal of attention, it would be of a less dangerous sort than if they should attempt to travel under a disguise as two males.

Our hero had reached the town where he bought the horse and buggy by cross cuts down the mountain and across valleys, but when it came to a return it was necessary for him to follow the road, and it was late in the evening when he found himself on a road far up the mountain and practically lost.

Besides, a storm was coming on, and he wished himself home, and his home was only the little rock-cut cavern in the side of the cliff.

"There is nothing to do but drive on," he said. "I fear I have lost the road."

We will explain that Bardie knew there was a road within a mile of the base of the cliff where he and Gadding had found shelter, and it had been his intention to drive nearly opposite the cliff cavern and picket his horse and make his way about to the eyrie.

The wind had risen and blew fierce and cold as he drove along, and occasionally little flakes of snow pelted upon his cheek.

"By George!" he muttered again, "I'm in a scrape, that is sure, and I'll soon be in the midst of a driving snow-storm in the mountains."

He urged his horse forward, and soon saw the glimmer of a light, and pressing on he arrived in front of a house, and looking at the window saw that it was a sort of tavern.

"Well, here I am. There's nothing for me to do but turn in for the night."

He drew up in front of the door, alighted and rapped, and a moment later the door was opened by a good, wholesome-looking woman.

"Can I get shelter here for man and horse for to-night?" demanded Bardie.

The woman's face assumed a perplexed look as she queried:

"Are you a man?"

"Bless your good heart, my dear woman, my horse is the man and horse too; don't you see I am a woman?"

"I have one room left."

"One will do. And can you take care of my horse?"

"Yes, there is room in the barn."

"Then I'm all right. Is there a man round there to take charge of my horse?"

"I will take your horse to the barn if you will wait until I get a lantern."

"I'll wait, of course."

The woman went inside and soon returned with a lantern, and she led the horse round to the rear of the house, after having first bid our hero enter and make himself comfortable.

The hostess was gone about twenty minutes, and returned, and Bardie asked for something to eat.

"I can give you some cold meat, bread, and a glass of milk."

"That will do. I'd ask no better for a king under the circumstances."

While our hero was talking, two men entered the room—two villainous-looking fellows, whom he at once recognized as Italians—and they were as dangerous a looking pair as he had ever seen.

They said nothing to our hero, but demanded a candle, and after casting peculiar glances at the new arrival, they started upstairs.

When they had gone, Bardie asked:

"Who are those men?"

"I do not know them. They arrived about two hours ago, and applied for lodgings."

The woman was evidently very nervous, and her face was pale.

"They are a hard-looking pair," said our hero, in a low tone.

"I do not like their looks, and I have been almost frightened to death ever since their arrival."

"Have you no husband?"

"Yes, but he is away."

"Are there no men in the house besides these two Italians?"

"My old father is here, but he is over eighty years old."

"How far from here is your nearest neighbor?"

"Over a mile away."

"Do you expect your husband home to-night?"

"No; he only comes home Saturday nights. He is at work on the big summer hotel they are building up by the lake."

"And you are alone in this house with your old father?"

"And two small children."

"Do you not have a man to help you?"

"No; this is not a regular tavern. We merely offer lodging and refreshments, and it is not often we have customers to remain overnight, but sometimes in the summer I do considerable business in the day-time, selling milk and bread and meat."

"And you are afraid of those two men?"

"Yes, I've been almost frightened to death ever since they came here, and yet I could not refuse them lodgings and food as we have a sign out offering both."

"And you are really suspicious of them?"

"Yes, I am; I was thinking of going over and asking our neighbor as a favor to remain here with me to-night."

"And it is a mile to his house?"

"Yes."

"You need not worry. I am going to stay here to-night."

"But you are only a woman."

"I know it; but I am a woman of nerve. I am not afraid of two dirty Italians; and if they attempt any capers here they will find they are in the wrong house."

"Do you mean to say you are not afraid of them?"

"Yes, I do."

"Do you know, I did not like the way they looked at you when they came in here."

"I noticed their looks."

"Did you?"

"Yes."

"And are you not scared?"

"Me scared? No, not one bit. I've had some experience. I've been a lone woman so long I've learned to take care of myself."

"But there are two of them."

"I don't care; and I wouldn't if there were two more of them. So you need have no fear; one woman like myself, you will find, is better than two or three timid men in the house. Yes, I tell you, don't have any fear. You just show me my room and go to bed, and if you hear anything from those rascals just holler, and I'll be with you, and I'll teach 'em something. Yes, I will."

"I will go and fix your room."

"Yes, do."

The woman left the room, and Bardie's eyes fell on a big oaken billet in one corner of the room. It was about, three feet in length, and a magnificent stick of its kind. This our hero hid in the folds of his dress, and awaited the return of his hostess.

CHAPTER LV.

A FEW moments passed, and the woman re-entered the room.

"Your bed is ready," she said.

"That is all right, madame. Show me up; and now remember, you need not feel any fear; if anything happens, just give an alarm, and you can depend upon me if I am only a woman."

"I hope nothing will happen; the men may be all right; but I am dreadfully nervous, and possibly my fears are not warranted, but I wish it was morning once again."

"I tell you have no fear; these Italians are great cowards, and I've met them before."

"Then you knew the two men?"

"No; I have not met these two particular men, but I've met Italians, and I know how to deal with them; but good-night."

Bardie ascended to his room. It was a pretty fair-sized room, and there was a good, comfortable bed in one corner which looked very inviting.

"Hang those rascals!" muttered our hero.

"It's a shame to be compelled to lie awake in

such a tempting bed; but as I live, I dare not close my eyes until near morning, for I do not fancy the looks of those two hard-looking fellows."

While our hero was communing with himself, he overheard the low voices of the two men, and soon ascertained that they occupied the room adjoining his own. Bardie went close to the wall, and as the partition was very thin, he had little difficulty in overhearing what was said, although the villains spoke in a very low tone.

As has been intimated, our hero was a fine linguist. He spoke not only German, but Italian and Spanish; and in knocking around the world he found his accomplishments very useful. His neighbors were speaking in their native tongue, and he heard one say:

"We'd better go down and fix the woman down-stairs before we see what the lodger has got."

"Bah! what does it matter about the woman down-stairs."

"She may give an alarm."

"There are no houses within a mile of here, and she could not be heard if she shouted her tongue out of her head."

"But there may be people passing along the road?"

"Not to-night."

"It is better to make sure. You stay here, and I will go down-stairs; the woman has not gone to bed yet; remember, we want what money she has in the house, it was that we came here for."

"But the other woman has got the most money."

"How do you know?"

"When these women go traveling they are on some errand that requires money, and you can bet she has plenty of it in her purse."

"Well, we want it all. We want the money of both women."

"What will you do?"

"I will go down and pretend I am sick; I will ask for some liquor, and then I will catch hold of her and compel her to tell me where the money all is, and then she shall tell me about the other woman."

"She will give an alarm."

"I will see that she does not give an alarm; but if she should happen to do so, you attend to the woman in the next room."

As stated, the men conversed in Italian, but our hero understood every word that they said, and he muttered:

"Well, it is strange that I should have landed right here; but I will give those fellows the worst lambasting any two miscreants ever got, and if they don't moosey, then I am a woman indeed!"

A half hour passed and all was still in the adjoining room from our hero; but the latter was on the alert and prepared for the least movement, and finally he heard stealthy steps. He had good hearing, and he was all prepared. He tied up his dress so it would not be in his way in case of a scuffle, and then waited.

Meantime the woman who owned the tavern had been too nervous to retire, and sat by the hearth with a single candle burning on the mantel-shelf. Suddenly she was disturbed by a sound, and, looking up, saw one of the two Italians step into the room with a stealthy step. She was too paralyzed with fear to utter an outcry.

The Italian pretended to smile pleasantly, and in a low tone and in broken English he asked:

"Have you some brandy?"

The woman shook her head negatively.

"I am very sick. I want some liquor. I will pay you for it."

While speaking he advanced toward the woman until he was within a few feet of her.

"You have no brandy?"

The woman shook her head.

"No whisky?"

Again the woman shook her head. The man glanced around furtively and then drew a formidable-looking knife, and in a low, distinct voice said:

"Do not move or speak!"

The woman sat spell-bound and silent, really paralyzed with fear, and in a hoarse whisper the man said:

"You have money; where is it?"

The woman did not attempt to reply. She did not move. In a hoarser whisper the man said:

"Where is your money?"

The woman reeled over and fell senseless from her seat, and there came a diabolical smile to

The face of the robber. He returned to the stairs and raised a low signal whistle, and our hero heard the other fellow descend the stairs.

"Now it is my turn," said Bardie. Our hero went down the stairs and arrived just in time to see an old man totter into the room.

"Eh! what do you want?" demanded one of the robbers.

The old man stood and gazed aghast an instant, and then said, in a firm tone:

"You two rascals are robbers. I thought so when you came here."

The old man stepped toward the wall where a gun was slung on two staples, but in a moment he was seized by one of the men, and at this moment our hero slipped down into the kitchen, and demanded, in a screechy voice:

"Here, here, what is going on here?"

"Knife!" called the rascal who had singled the old man, and he spoke in his natural tongue.

The Italian drew a knife and sprang toward our hero; the next instant he lay sprawling on the floor with the blood gushing from a wound on his head. Bardie had used the oaken stick, and when he struck the blow it was what the boys call a "corker."

The rascal who had seized the old man immediately sprang toward our hero. He also held a knife in his grasp, but he too received a rap that spread him out on the floor.

CHAPTER LVI.

"WELL done! Who are you?" demanded the old man.

"I am a lodger here, my friend. I arrived after you had retired to bed, and now you attend to your daughter, and I will attend to these rascals."

One of the Italians had partially recovered from the blow he had received, and was seeking to rise to his feet, when Bardie said:

"Lie still, you villain, or I'll brain you completely!"

The fellow rolled back on the floor.

Meantime the good woman who owned the house had been revived. She looked around, and a shudder passed over her frame.

"I told you to have no fear," said Bardie.

The woman glanced at the two bleeding Italians lying upon the floor and almost went off into another faint, but Bardie ran to her and in reassuring tones told her not to be afraid, and her father joined in the assurance.

"Go and get me a rope," said our hero to the old man.

The old fellow, who was quite spry for a man of his years, seized a lantern, lighted it, and passed out to the yard, and in a few moments returned with a rope. Bardie bound the two robbers hand and foot, bound them in such a manner that they could not move anything but their heads. The fellows were rather stupid from the effects of the blow they had received.

When the two men were bound, Bardie said: "Now I will take a sleep, and, old man, as it is near morning and you have had a good sleep, you can remain on watch, and if anything occurs just give the alarm."

Bardie went upstairs, and lying down on the bed was soon fast asleep, and he slept on until in the morning there came a loud rap at his door.

"Madame! madame!" called a voice.

"Who's there?" cried Bardie.

"Open the door, madame, or, rather, get up and come down stairs."

"Miss, if you please," said Bardie.

"Excuse me; but will you please come downstairs, miss?"

"I will let you come in the room presently. You wait there where you are."

Bardie moved about the room a moment, and after adjusting his disguise, opened the door, and there stood a tall, strong, honest-looking man.

"Well, I declare! I wanted a good look at you, madame."

"Miss, if you please."

"Oh, excuse me! Miss, I mean. I've just heard about how you laid out those two robbers, and saved the life of Mrs. Moore. Excuse me, but you're a daisy, but probably you did not know we were after those two men."

"Well, somebody ought to be after them, for they are a dangerous pair to be at large."

"They will not be at large any longer. We've caught 'em at last."

"How were after them, eh?"

"We were, and we've got 'em in the wagon

ready to take 'em off. Yes, they committed a robbery twenty miles from here. We've got the evidence dead against 'em, and we're going to hold 'em on that charge; but you, I couldn't go away without seeing you, miss. Yes, Mrs. Moore and the old man told me all about it; and it's lucky you were here, or those assassins would have murdered the whole family."

"Yes, they are very bad men."

"And what's your name?"

Bardie answered with a wry expression, and said:

"No, I will not tell you my name; you will put it in the papers."

"But I must know your name and address. You may be needed as a witness."

Bardie gave a fictitious name and address, and the man, who was a constable, wrote it down.

"Will you come down and let the other fellows see you?" asked the man.

"No, thank you. I'm a modest lady. I'll not go down."

"Well, miss, you may hear from me in a few days. I suppose Mrs. Moore knows where to find you?"

"I'll leave my address with Mrs. Moore; but as you have it already, I do not see what difference it makes."

"Well, good-morning. Miss, I tell you it would be gay if all the old maids were like you!"

"Sir!" ejaculated our hero.

"Of course I meant to say if all the ladies were like you."

"You can go."

The constable, with a laugh, walked downstairs, and our hero, looking out of the window, saw the two prisoners just as he had bound them, lying in the bottom of a wagon, and four men were sitting as guard over them besides the constable, who was acting as driver.

The men drove away after a time, and our hero descended the stairs, where he was met and greeted by Mrs. Moore, who told him a long story about the Italians, and how they had committed a crime in a town over in Ulster County. The woman was also profuse in her expressions of admiration for her rescuer.

"Well, I told you," said Bardie, "I was brought up to take care of myself. I ain't afraid of no men."

"It is evident you are not. You are a regular Amazon," said the old man.

A good breakfast had been provided for our hero, and when he had eaten it he asked for his horse.

As good fortune would have it, the threatened snow-storm had turned out to be very light, and the road was all clear and hard.

Bardie told a cock and bull story, as the term goes, about himself, and agreed to drive over and see Mrs. Moore some day, and in good season got in his buggy and drove away before the neighbors heard of the adventure and drove over to learn all the particulars.

Bardie had made some inquiries about the roads, and had learned enough to be convinced that in the darkness he had made a wrong turn; so he was compelled to retrace his ride, and in good time got on the right road, and while still early in the morning he came in sight of the cliff where his home was located.

As good fortune favored him, he had not met a living soul on the road, and when he reached the proper place he turned into the woods, picketed his horse, and started afoot for the eyrie.

In good time he entered the cavern. Tom was awaiting him, and greeted him with joyous delight.

"Well, well, you are back safe and sound!"

"Yes, I am here, and I've had some pretty lively adventures; but one thing I can tell you, old man, the female racket for us will work like a charm. We're all right for the West."

CHAPTER LVII.

BARDIE proceeded and related all that had befallen him, and kept Gadding laughing heartily when he told of his purchase of the horse.

"And where is your horse?"

"He is all right. I erected a temporary stable for him, fed him well, and left him, but I intend to see him again about sundown, and to-morrow we will start."

At about sundown Bardie did go and attend to his horse, and he fixed the animal so he would be quite comfortable until the following morning. Having fixed the horse, our hero returned to the cavern. The men were quite

cozy and comfortable; indeed, Gadding once more remarked:

"I wish we were to remain here; I like this; it is real comfort."

"It is quite nice and comfortable," said Bardie; "but it don't pay."

"But it is so restful to stay here, especially to a man who has been hounded all his life."

"We will go where we will not be hounded."

"We will go west, I suppose?"

"Yes, south-west. Indeed, I've made up my mind to go to Mexico."

"To Mexico!"

"Yes."

"What put that idea in your head?"

"When I was at the tavern where I bought our horse I fell across a book on Mexico. I read a little of it, and I made up my mind that was the land for us. We'll go prospecting, and we'll find one of those old mines, eh, and we'll dig out a fortune. We will play Monte-Cristo to the real life, old man."

"I fear you are a dreamer."

"Well, all right; we will go to sleep on dreams. Remember, you owe a great deal to dreams, according to your own confession; and the only difference is you dream when you are asleep; all mine are waking dreams, and mine will be realized, I am sure."

"You seem very confident."

"Yes, I am. I feel I am a child of destiny. I've luck with me, and if you stick to me we'll come out all right."

"I'll stick to you!"

The two men went to sleep, and theirs was a peaceful and restful slumber. At an early hour they awoke and set to work to prepare for their journey. They packed all their goods, and at an early hour bade adieu to their cave home where they had passed such a pleasant rest for quite a number of days.

"I shall always remember that cave in the cliff," said Gadding.

"And so will I," replied Bardie, adding: "we will have plenty of cave life yet, I reckon, when we get to Mexico or out West."

The two men were an odd-looking couple in their disguise as two old women, and when everything was packed in their buggy they set out upon their journey.

As part of their road was down the mountain, they made good progress, and at night reached a village fully twenty-five miles distant from the place where they had started. Here they found a little tavern, where they sought shelter. Bardie told his own tale concerning their mission, and they secured good lodging and fare, and in the morning resumed their journey.

Our hero had a way of gaining information without letting on that he was seeking any, and he got all the knowledge he needed as to their route for the following day.

Bardie intended to cross New York State and get into Ohio, where he intended to sell his outfit, retain his disguise, and travel by train to St. Louis.

Upon the second morning they resumed their journey, and as they had pretty good roads they covered fully thirty miles, and at night arrived at a tavern in quite a large village, at which place they attracted considerable attention.

In the rear of the tavern was an old graveyard, and the window of the pretended old ladies' room looked out upon the white slabs gleaming under the moonlight. There was a large manufactory in the town, and quite a number of the male operatives boarded at the tavern. Late in the evening a party of them were gathered in the bar-room, and when pretty full of drink they commenced talking about the old maids, as they called the latest guests.

One of the party was known as a practical joker, and he proposed that they should give the old women a scare.

The proprietor of the tavern protested, but the men overruled him. The fact was, Bardie had done a good deal of talking at the supper-table. He had been seeking information, and in order to throw off all suspicion, had talked in a very sarcastic manner, and had boasted of his destitution of men.

One of the party at the table suggested that she might not fear the living, but might tremble in the presence of the dead.

Bardie protested he—but apparently she—did not fear either the living or the dead.

"You had better be careful," said the man.

"Why?"

"This hotel is located next to a grave-yard."

"Is it?"

"Yes."

"Well, what of that?"

"It is said that sometimes the ghosts walk into the rooms of this house."

The man was only amusing himself, and believed he was "coddling" the two old maids, as the saying goes, and it was the above conversation that led to the suggestion that they should give the old girls a scare.

The fact is, Bardie, as the old maid, had, as stated, talked in a very bitter and sarcastic manner, and when the proposition was made it was hailed with delight.

We will here state that our hero was always on the alert, and he had stolen down the stairway and stood in the dark hall listening to what was going on in the room. He was seeking to learn whether there was any suspicion as concerned himself and comrade, and he was listening when the proposition was made to give the old ladies a scare.

It was arranged that one of the men should array himself in a sheet, and a knotted rope was to be suspended from the roof, with which the fellow was to swing himself to the room window. A party was to station themselves in the hall, ready to rush in when the old ladies uttered their screams of terror, and another party was to stand outside to see the fun and be ready to aid the ghost if service was required.

Bardie overheard all the details of the plot, and a broad smile played over his face. Our hero was a natural joker himself, and when it came to turning one's own joke on himself, that he considered just high fun indeed.

As stated, he heard all the details of the plan, and also learned that the fellows proposed to carry out the joke just at midnight. Indeed, an old bell was to toll the midnight hour for the especial benefit of the old maids.

"You may have a nice time, my lads," muttered Bardie. "But between you and me, it's myself and Tom will have the most fun."

CHAPTER LVIII.

BARDIE knew that it was about half past eleven, and that in half an hour he would have to look for the ghost. He started to go upstairs, when he remembered that in the lower hall there were two buckets of water, and he stole along through the dark passage and seized the two buckets, and carried them to his room. To Gadding he revealed what was to occur.

"This is unfortunate," said Tom.

"Unfortunate?"

"Yes."

"What makes you say so?"

"It will lead to exposure."

"Will it? On the contrary, it will afford us lots of fun, and I'm hankering after a bit of fun, so I am."

"What will you do with the two pails of water?"

"I've them for the ghost or his friends."

"I fear you will get us into trouble."

"Don't you fear."

Bardie proceeded and related to Tom all the details of the jokers, and directed his comrade how he was to act in order to spoil the joke on its promoters.

The two pretended old maids returned to bed, and at twelve o'clock there came the solemn twang of the bell, and it was beaten right at the door. At the same moment the window opened, and an apparition in white appeared. The object stole into the room on his toes. There fell the regular breathing of the sleepers; the bell seemingly had failed to awake them.

A moment the ghost stood in the center of the room, and then silently approached the bed and laid his hand on one of the sleepers. The latter moved, and naturally reaching over, laid her hand on that of her sister, and in a subdued voice said:

"Janie, wake up; there is some one in the room."

Sister Janie woke up, and on rubbing her eyes gazed an instant at the apparition. It was a clear moonlight night, and the outlines of the ghost shone clear and well defined in all its ghastly ghostliness.

"Mariah," said sister Janie, "it's a ghost."

"A what?"

"It's a ghost."

Sister Mariah rose up in bed, and gazing at the apparition, demanded in a reasonably fine voice:

"What do you want here?"

In sepulchral tones the ghost answered:

"I've come to warn you."

"Who are you?"

"I am the ghost of a man who was murdered in this house."

"Where did you come from?"

"My grave."

"Your grave?"

"Yes."

"Where is your grave?"

"In the cemetery close by here."

"Well, take my advice and return to your grave; you'll be warmer."

"I have come to warn you," said the ghost, in hoarse tones.

"We don't need any warning. You just get out of here. We've no call for ghosts here. We didn't murder you. If you want to wake people up, go and warn those who murdered you."

The ghost was rather disconcerted; the scare did not appear to work.

"Will you listen to me?"

"Go ahead."

"I've come to warn you."

"I warn you to go back to your grave or your bed."

The ghost was still more disconcerted. He saw that the scare was not working at all, and he also perceived that the old maids did not look upon him as a ghost, and if he returned without making the scare the laugh would be on him. He approached closer to the bed.

"I've come to warn you."

"Go ahead."

"I will tell you where my money is buried."

"I tell you that you had better get out of this room."

"Listen to me or I will take one of you back to my grave."

"See here, mister, I don't know who you are," said Sister Mariah, "but I think you're the fellow who was talking to me at the supper-table, and now you git."

The ghost made a grab as though to seize one of the old maids, when quicker than a flash both leaped from the bed. One seized the ghost and the other seized a bucket of water, and in about two seconds Mister Ghost was the worst soused apparition that ever glided from his grave.

The man howled with terror. The tables had been turned on him quicker than he dreamed, and the first act closed by the ghost's being tossed clean through the window.

At the same moment the door was burst open, when the two or three men who had gathered to see the fun received the contents of the second bucket of water, and as they made a rush down the stairs, buckets, pitchers and other articles were thrown after them. Then the door of the old maids' room was closed and quiet prevailed.

A few moments later there was a motley gathering in the bar-room, and gathered as a witness to the scene was the landlord's wife, a resolute and determined woman, who, had she known of the intended outrage, would have prevented it, but when she saw how it had resulted she was delighted.

The ghost presented a sorry picture, and he was a crest-fallen man. He was wet clean through. The ghostly sheet had been no protection to him, and he was badly bruised by his fall through the window. The other men who were gathered in the hall, and who had broken into the room, were also well soused. Those who had escaped were jubilant, and they indulged their laugh at the expense of the others. But it was the landlord's wife who most enjoyed the absolute discomfiture of the jokers.

"Well," she exclaimed, as she stood in the door-way, "so you fellows were up to your practical jokes, eh, and you've got a good dose; you are a pretty lot, ain't you?"

"You're at the bottom of this," cried one of the men.

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, suppose I am. I helped to serve you fellows just right."

The woman laughed heartily, and she was perfectly willing to be accused of having put up the joke on the jokers.

"Who told you about it, any way?"

"It makes no difference who told me. Jake did not tell me, but it was his duty to have told me."

"I took no part in it, and tried to keep them from it," said the landlord.

"Yes, and you should have prevented it, but seeing you didn't, I just arranged matters myself, and you fellows are served just right. You should be ashamed of yourselves to assail two unprotected females."

"Unprotected females, eh?" said the man who had played the part of the ghost. "Well, between you and me and the church steeple, if those old gals aren't able to take care of themselves, we're all unprotected, that's all."

"A nice thing this is to tell about, eh, Tom Seeley?" jeered the landlord's wife, and she laughed and laughed.

CHAPTER LIX.

UPON the morning following the incidents we have described, Bardie and Tom appeared in the breakfast-room, but there were no jokes there to greet them. The men had had enough of the old maids.

After a good meal our hero and his comrade entered their buggy, and drove along upon their journey, and that day managed to travel thirty-five miles. They found a village and a small tavern also. They put up at the tavern, and passed the night without any adventures.

As they started to ride out on the following morning, Bardie overheard a remark he did not like. A man sitting on the porch of the tavern said to the landlord:

"If you were not robbed last night you are lucky."

Bardie listened and heard the landlord ask:

"What are you driving at?"

"It ain't all straight with those women."

"Not all straight with those women?"

"No, according to my idea, there's something wrong there."

"I don't understand you."

"Well, may be you don't, but I know what I'm talking about, and I'll just see about it."

"Thank you," said Bardie, in an undertone, "thank you for that little intimation. When you are about we won't be 'thar'."

Tom had not overheard the conversation, but when they were driving along, Bardie said:

"Tom, we're in danger."

"In danger?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"A d—n fool has tumbled."

"That's bad, I thought we were getting along so nicely."

"No, it's against us now."

"What will you do?"

"We are all right for the present; we will drive on and decide upon our course."

The companions drove about twenty miles, and saw that they were approaching a large city. It was near evening, and Bardie said:

"We will have to make a change now."

Bardie drove down a lonely lane. When the two men alighted the woman's attire was discarded, and they assumed a male disguise.

"I don't know exactly what to do with the horse and buggy," said Bardie.

"Sell it."

"And leave a trace behind; no, that will not do. I'll manage this business. You go on to that city. I will give you money. Take up your lodgings at a hotel, and lay low. Walk by the post-office wherever it may be. Do that until you see me. I will turn up sooner or later."

"What will you do?"

"I will drive off alone, and manage to get rid of our horse and buggy. We are all right. They will start to trail two old women. Let them; but now the two old women are transformed into men. I need not give you any advice how to act, you are an old fugitive; but be careful. I will join you sooner or later, although it may be some days before we come together again."

Tom Gadding put out his hand, and he said:

"Bardie, if we shall never meet again I shall never forget you."

"Nonsense, man! We are all right. We shall meet again, and possibly in a few hours, but sooner or later I'll get you to Mexico with me, and don't you forget it, that's all."

The two men separated.

Bardie got into the buggy, and returned to the road, and Tom Gadding proceeded to the city. He reached the latter all right, and took up his lodgment at a sort of farmers' resort, a hotel where country people were wont to gather as they came in from the rural districts.

Meantime Bardie drove along, and it was midnight when he reached a house that stood alone, and he was sure that in one direction there were no neighbors. He pickedet his horse, and started afoot to go to the house. He saw a light in the kitchen window, and he peeped in and there he saw three men playing

"They were three villainous-looking fellows, and I remarked as he gazed at them: 'It's all right. I've found my man.'"

"Our hero went back to where he had hitched his horse, and unhitching him, drove straight up to the house. The sound of his wheels drew the owner of the house to the door.

"Good-evening, boss," said our hero.

"It's good-morning, stranger; do you know it's after midnight?"

"Yes, I do, and I want to put up my horse."

"This is not a tavern."

"How far is it from here to the tavern?"

"About four miles."

"Too far for me to drive to-night. I'm going to stay here with you."

"I can't take a lodger."

"Yes you can. See here, I'll pay you treble price, and make you a present besides; but I can not travel any further to-night."

"Well, if you will put up with the best we've got it's all right."

"I'll put up with anything, so long as I have a roof over my head."

"I'll get a lantern, and go with you to the stable."

"All right, move quickly."

The man reappeared in a few moments with a lantern, and led the way round to a very dilapidated barn. The horse was unhitched, led in, provided with hay, and the man said:

"Come to the house, and I will do the best I can for you."

"Hold on a moment. I want to have a talk with you," said Bardie.

Our hero spoke in a peculiar tone.

"You want to have a talk with me?"

"Yes."

The man had spoken in a trembling voice, and a pallor had overspread his face.

"What do you want to talk about?"

"Yourself."

"Me?"

"Yes, you."

"Well, come into the house."

"No, we will talk here."

"What are you up to, stranger?"

"Oh, you need not be scared. I know you are a rogue, and that is why I came here."

"You know I am a rogue?"

"Yes."

"I won't take that, mister, from no man. Sile Simmons is well known around here, and this is the first time any one has dared to call him a rogue."

"The people around here do not know you as well as I do, Sile, that's all. I know who I'm talking to. I tell you I came here to see you."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"Well, come into the house?"

"Who are your friends in there?"

"Neighbors."

"No, they're not neighbors."

"See here, boss, you are barking up the wrong tree, you are."

Bardie laughed. He saw his advantage, and said:

"You are the one who is barking up the wrong tree."

"Not I."

"Yes."

"How?"

"You think I'm a detective, but you're wrong, old man."

CHAPTER LX.

THERE followed an interval of silence, broken at length by Sile Simmons, who said:

"Who are you, anyhow?"

"It don't make any difference who I am. You see, I am not telling my name just at present."

"You appear to know me pretty well."

"Yes."

"You know my name. There you have the best of me."

"You are pretty well known around here. It is not strange I should know your name."

"Well, what do you want?"

"Lodging."

"I've offered you those."

"That's all right, but I don't want to give you trouble. Don't concern yourself about me when I retire."

"That's all right."

"Your friends may be inquisitive."

"Well."

"Just tell them I'm an old friend who is here, and has gone straight to bed."

"What am you up to, anyhow?"

"You asked me that question once before, old man."

"I ask it again."

"All I want is to be let alone and not annoyed, that's all; so you can show me into the house and straight to my room, and mind, I do not want to be disturbed until morning, and then I'll tell you something to your advantage."

"See here, I can't answer for my friends."

"You can't?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"They may be inquisitive."

"They had better not."

"Why don't you come right out?"

"Will you keep a secret?"

"Certainly."

"Well, I don't wish to be seen. I am trying to cover my tracks. Now, do you understand? and I come to you, knowing it is all right."

"I hope it is," said Sile; "but come along, I'll show you to your room."

The man led our hero into the house by the rear door, and led him straight upstairs, and showed him into a meanly furnished room.

"Leave me your light, and say good-night," said Bardie.

The man left the light, closed the door, and our hero was alone.

"Well," he muttered, "this is all right so far, but I may have a call from that fellow's friends, after all."

Simmons descended to the room where he had left his companions.

"Well, what is it?" said one of them.

"A friend of mine."

"A friend, eh?"

"Yes."

"That won't work, old man; we heard you when you first spoke to him."

"Well, it's all right."

"So you say, but we don't see it."

"Well, you fellows go on with the game."

"Not until we know more about your lodger."

"I can't tell you anything about him."

"I can," said one of the men. "He's a detective, and he's up to something."

"I don't know anything about him more than what he told me."

"What did he tell you?"

"He's a fugitive."

"Bah! that's only a trick."

"All right, you fellows know as much about it as I do; you can 'fit.'"

"We won't 'fit.' We've got him all right. We'll interview him."

"I don't care what you do."

Two of the men rose from the table, and ascended the stairs. They went to our hero's room, and rapped on the door.

"Who's there?"

"We want to come in, boss."

"Come in then."

The men opened the door, and entered. Bardie had not extinguished his light, and was sitting on the edge of his bed.

"Good-evening, boss."

"Good-evening," responded Bardie.

"We've come to see you."

"So I see," answered Bardie, with a laugh.

"Who are you, and why did you come here?"

"Does it concern you?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"Well, we are friends of Sile."

"Ah, you are."

"Yes."

"Well, what do you want?"

"We want to know who you are."

"Get out of here, and don't bother me."

"Don't talk sassy, boss. We ain't taking no sass from any one, leastwise a stranger who comes stealin' into a man's house after midnight. We think you're a bad un, and we want you to show up, and you shall show up, and that's plain talk, too, I reckon."

"Will you fellows get out of here?"

"No, we've come to stay," came the answer in a different tone.

Bardie stepped across the room toward the men, when one whipped out a knife, and said:

"Go slow, boss; we're here to listen to your explanation."

"I'll give it to you," said Bardie.

Our hero had cut himself a heavy, short club, and he carried it with him. He was an adept with the article, and a club in the hands of a master is a most dangerous weapon. Indeed, the old-time saying in the song, "A shillalah will never miss fire," is true. Bardie drew his club, and advanced toward the men. His bold

front was too much for them. They retreated toward the door.

"Will you fellows get out of here?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean fight if you don't leave."

The second man drew a revolver, when Bardie suddenly leaped forward, and as quick as lightning he knocked the pistol from the hands of the one and the knife from the hands of the other, and his action was so quick and sure the two men stood aghast.

"It's lucky I did not give it to you on your heads," said Bardie. "But you get out of here or I'll harm you."

The men made a move to recover their weapons, when our hero gave each of them a thump, one on the arm, the other on the most exposed part as he stooped over.

"Just leave those articles where they are," said Bardie, as the two men straightened up.

The two envoys were amazed.

"Now, see here," said our hero, "I've fooled with you fellows long enough. I want to go to sleep, and I want you to get out. If you've any scores to settle with me you'll have a chance in the morning."

The two men backed out of the room, and our hero locked his door on the inside. Before re-entering the room below the men sat down and looked rather streaked, as the saying goes.

"What did you make out?" demanded their companion.

"That man is a cop, and he's a terror, that's all."

"What does he want here?"

"I don't know," said the speaker; "but I'm going to git, that's all; and do you mind, Simmons, if you are up to any game you'll hear from us."

"I swear I don't know anything about the man."

"You'll know more about him in the morning."

CHAPTER LXI.

BARDIE sat up awhile, and hearing no more from the men, he turned in, and as he was a good sleeper, he dosed off, and was not disturbed. In the morning he awoke and descended the stairs, and was met by Simmons, who showed him into a room, where a breakfast awaited him. There he saw a woman whom he took for the man's wife, and two interesting children.

After the breakfast, our hero wanted Simmons to accompany him to the barn.

"You've a nice family, Simmons," said our hero.

"Yes, I have."

"But you are a bad man."

The fellow made no reply.

"Take a stranger's advice, start out to be honest, and stick to it. It will change your luck and bring you happiness in the end."

"Are you a preacher?"

"I'm preaching now."

"So I see."

"And now let's to business. I want to sell you my horse and buggy."

"I've no money to buy."

"Have you one dollar?"

"Yes, I have."

"I'll sell you the whole rig for one dollar."

The man's eyes opened wide.

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. I came honestly by the stock, but I want to sell it; and now see here, I've a favor to ask of you. Put the buggy out of sight and keep the horse in the stable for some time, then you can drive it out in the open light of day without fear or favor."

"What does it all mean?"

"You can make a friend who will do you a service some day."

"But I may get myself in trouble."

"No, you will not. But you make me laugh."

"How?"

"To talk about trouble. Why, you would steal the horse and buggy if you had a chance, and then you are hesitating about accepting it as a gift."

"But may be you stole it."

"No, I bought and paid for it."

"Then why do you wish to give it away?"

"There are men on my track. Why they are on my track is my business, not yours. My buggy is a clew to me, not to itself, do you understand? I want to hide my tracks. I do not want to get away with any stock, and I tell you that you can make a friend, and some day I will be of service to you if you behave yourself and

I find you all right when the clouds have rolled away."

"I'll buy the horse."

"And keep the agreement?"

"Yes."

"You have another horse?"

"Yes."

"And wagon?"

"Yes."

"I want you to drive me a few miles, and then forget you ever saw me for a week, and then you can relate about me all you please."

"How about the men who were here last night?"

"They will be quiet. They think I am a detective. Let 'em think so; it's all right as long as no harm has come to you from my visit."

Sile hitched up his horse and drove our hero as far as he desired to go, when Bardie got down from the wagon, bid the man good-day, and started on afoot. He reached the city in good time, and had little difficulty in finding the post-office, and after a half hour he met Gadding. The two men walked off together.

"What has happened?" asked Bardie.

"Nothing to me, but I tell you the whole State appears to be aroused. They are on the lookout for two old women, and our horse and buggy is fully described in this morning's papers."

"It's all right; we will run the gantlet."

"What is your plan?"

"You take the first train that goes through, and travel to Cleveland, there you will wait for me. It will not do for us to travel together. I will find you at the post-office."

Bardie gave Gadding money for his ticket, and money to pay his hotel bills.

Gadding was enabled to take the noon train, and Bardie followed in the midnight train, just twelve hours later.

Our hero arrived at Cleveland without having encountered any adventures, and on the afternoon of the following day met Gadding.

"Well, old man, so far so good."

"Yes."

"We are out of York State."

"We are."

"Our next jump will be to Cincinnati."

"You take the evening train, I will take the morning train."

Gadding departed on time, and our hero took up his quarters at a hotel. He had bought a second-hand trunk in Elmira, the city from where they had first taken the train, and he had also purchased a few necessary articles in Cleveland.

Just twelve hours later he boarded a train to follow Gadding, and in due time reached Cincinnati, and there met his friend. Gadding was rather uneasy when he met Bardie.

"Old man, you are disturbed," said our hero.

"I am."

"What is the matter?"

"There is a fellow on my track."

"There is?"

"Yes."

"Where did he start in for you?"

"He boarded the train at Columbus."

"And where is he now?"

"I don't know, but he has put up at the hotel with me."

"Are not your natural fears and suspicions causing you unnecessary alarm?"

"No."

"The man is really tracking you?"

"Yes, and, by George, there he is!"

"Where?"

"Coming."

"Has he seen you?"

"No."

"Good; we will separate. He will start to follow you. I will start a double trail. Leave all to me. If I corner him you get back and take the first train for St. Louis. I'll drop the man out, you need not fear."

The two men separated quickly, and a moment later Bardie swung round and saw that indeed a man was on Gadding's track. The latter walked along beyond the city line, and his follower was at his heels, and Bardie kept closely in the rear, and at length when an opportunity offered he made a detour and managed to come face to face with Gadding's pursuer, and quick as thought our hero seized the man, exclaiming:

"You're the fellow I want."

The man struggled, but Bardie held him tightly, and said:

"Yes, sir, I've got you at last."

"Let go of me, you fool, or I'll harm you."

"No, you will not harm me; and now see

here, I want my pocket book. I've been following you. Give me my pocket-book, and I'll let you go, otherwise I'll hand you over to the police."

The man drew a revolver, and exclaimed:

"Let go of me, I say."

CHAPTER LXII.

"Don't you draw a pistol on me, you rascal!" said Bardie.

"You fool, do you think I am a thief?"

"I know you are."

The man laughed, and said:

"Hang you, I am an officer!"

"Oh, you can't play that on me!"

"I am a detective."

"You are, eh?"

"Yes, I am. And you let go of me quickly or I'll hurt you."

"No, you won't. I ain't afraid of a pistol. You can't scare me; and if you are an officer you can prove it."

"I'll prove it by arresting you."

"Will you?"

"Yes, I will."

"All right; arrest me; but I'll call an officer to arrest you if you do not hand me back my pocket-book."

The officer made an effort to wrest himself from our hero's grasp, when the latter seized the man's wrist and gave it such a twist that he caused him to drop his weapon, and then he threw the man and fell on him, shouting out at the same time:

"Police! police!"

At length a policeman appeared on the scene, and Bardie exclaimed:

"Seize that man. He's a thief!"

The officer did seize the man who pretended to be a detective and held his club threateningly over the man's head.

"He has my pocket-book," said Bardie.

"Hold on, officer, go easy," said the man; "this is all a mistake. I am a detective."

"You are a detective, eh?"

"Yes, I am."

"Well, come to the station, and we will soon find out."

The man threw back his coat and displayed his shield. The moment Bardie's eyes fell on the badge he assumed a very crest-fallen look.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "Indeed, I do; but I would swear you are the man who stole my pocket-book. I am sorry I made such a mistake."

The detective was mad, for he had lost his trail: but as it appeared, he did not for one moment suspect the sincerity of our hero, so well did the latter act his part.

"I never made such a mistake before in all my life," said Bardie. "Hang it, what can I do to make it right?"

"How did you come to suspect me?" demanded the officer.

"I could swear you were the man, if I went by looks; but I see there must be some mistake, and I'll make any reparation you demand."

"It's all right, old fellow; but you have let a bad fellow get away, I fear. I was on the track of a man when you seized me."

"You were?"

"Yes."

"By ginger! it may be the fellow you were tracking who stole my pocket-book."

"How much did you lose?"

"Three or four dollars."

"Where do you live?"

"In York State."

The detective gave our hero a card, and told him to call at the hotel and tell him all about it. Bardie renewed his apologies, and the two men separated. The officer had lost half an hour, and Gadding had gained that time, and our hero hoped he had made good use of it.

Bardie did not return to the city until night, and then he called at the hotel where the detective had requested him to proceed. He found the officer and told him a cock and bull story about the loss of the pocket-book, and at the same time learned from the officer that he had lost all trace of the man he had been following.

Bardie was delighted, and satisfied that Gadding had got away.

"I don't blame you," said the detective; "but if it had not been for you I would have made a big 'pull.' I am satisfied."

"I am really sorry," said Bardie.

Upon the following morning our hero took an early train as far as Seymour, where he waited for the express, and the following day saw

him in St. Louis, where in due time he met Gadding.

Again the two men congratulated each other, and Bardie told of his adventure with the detective in Cincinnati, and asked:

"How did he come to get on your trail?"

"That is a mystery I can not fathom; but I rather think he got his cue from one of the railroad hands, as I recognized a man who was serving a term with me; and now let me tell you this is not a safe place for me, as I was once in jail at Joliet."

"All right, old man, we will get right out of here."

"Where do we go?"

"We will go to Mexico. I've an idea that is a good place to pick up a few dollars, and what is more, we will be safe; if any detectives bother us there, we can make short work of them."

The two fugitives remained in St. Louis several days, although they did not lodge together. Here they procured everything necessary for their trip to Mexico.

Of all places in the world, Mexico was the one place well suited for our Irish Monte-Cristo. He was a good linguist, a splendid athlete, and also a splendid pistol shot and accomplished swordsman. Just the sort of man to move among a high-strung people and all the time be on the alert to take his own part.

The destination of the fugitives was El Paso, and when one day's travel from St. Louis they felt quite safe. For reasons, they made each other's acquaintance on the train.

On the second day out from St. Louis they encountered their first adventure. On the train was a party of men whom Bardie from the first set down as rogues. He had read a great deal about western life, cow-boys and gamblers, and at once he came to the conclusion that the men were of one or the other class.

Our hero had been sleeping soundly despite the novelty of riding through a strange land, and had just awakened, when a fellow who pretended to be a very green and very countryfied chap took a seat alongside of him.

"Queer country this, stranger?"

Bardie glanced at the man and discerned at once that he was a sharper and up to some sort of trick, and he intended to teach the fellow a lesson.

It must be borne in mind that there are some men in the world who belong to a phenomenal class; they are not only physical wonders, but men of great nerve, and such men appear to be also very lucky, and our hero was one of these sort of men. He belonged to the phenomenal class we have described. He was a man of varied accomplishments, and above all possessed nerves that seemed to respond favorably to any exciting incident.

"Yes, it's a queer country," answered our hero.

"You're from the old country, I reckon?"

"I'm from York."

"But you are not a native of the United States?"

"No."

"What countryman are you?"

"What countryman do you think?"

"I should think you were a Scotchman."

"A Scotchman, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, my friend, you're way off. I'm a Dutchman."

CHAPTER LXIII.

WHEN Bardie told the man he was a Dutchman the fellow's face assumed an incredulous expression, and he said:

"Why do you call yourself a Dutchman?"

"What countryman are you?" demanded Bardie.

"I'm a western Yank."

"Some people call me a Frenchman."

"Ah, I see," said the stranger. "It don't make much difference where you were born, you are a fresh lad, I see; a smart Alec; one of these fellows who know it all, and have nothing to learn."

The man spoke in a half-joking tone, and was smiling all the time, so that really he was giving no offense.

"That is the fellow I am," answered Bardie.

"Where are you going, if I may ask?"

"To Mexico."

"Going to settle there?"

"I expect to do so."

"Going into business?"

"Yes, I reckon I will."

"What business will you start in?"
 "Why do you ask?"
 "I know something about Mexico, and may give you some good advice."
 "You have lived in Mexico?"
 "Yes."
 "I am going to raise broom corn."
 "Going to raise broom corn?"
 "Yes."
 "What for?"
 "To make brooms."
 "Who will make your brooms after you raise the corn?"
 "I will."
 "Going to start a factory?"
 "I may."

The men talked along for about an hour, and the stranger proved that he was well acquainted with Mexico, and he did give our hero considerable information. The two men got to talking quite amicably, until finally the stranger said:

"It's getting rather tedious. Can't we have some fun?"

"I'm willing. What can we do?"
 "Do you play cards?"
 "I have played."
 "Will you take a hand in a game?"
 "You and I?"
 "No; I will get a couple of other gentlemen to play."
 "All right. I don't care. I'd like to pass the time."

During his residence in New York, Bardie had seen considerable card playing, and had investigated the mysteries of the great American game of poker. He was not a card player, but he was of an investigating turn, and he generally sought to acquire the ins and outs of most everything that came under his attention.

The man went away, and soon returned and said:

"I've found several gentlemen who will play, and we will start the game in the baggage car."
 "All right," said Bardie, and he accompanied his new-found friend into the baggage car, where he met three other fellows of varied appearance; but he saw at a glance that although the men assumed different characters they were really one in purpose and up to any game that might offer.

A trunk was utilized as a table, and various articles were pressed into service for seats, and the game opened. The men were quite jolly, and the stakes played for at first were small. Bardie was a uniform winner, and the men good-naturedly battered him as to his luck. Gradually the stakes were increased, and the game grew more reckless, and Bardie continued to win, until finally the real purpose of the thieves was exposed. A man held a hand and so did Bardie, and the latter's hand was a big one, but he would not back it beyond a small bet, and several times the same incident occurred, and at length the three thieves tumbled to the fact that our hero was not to be drawn into a snap. Indeed, they evidently began to suspect that he was too smart for them, but they determined to have his money all the same, and at the proper time one of the men took advantage of a little point and accused Bardie of cheating.

"I've played you a fair hand every time," said our hero.

"It's false. We are gentlemen. We sat down with you believing you were a gentleman. You are a cheat, a professional gambler, and you've robbed us, and you must return our money."

"Well, as I only sat down here for amusement, I am perfectly willing to return you what little money I have won."

"You have won six hundred dollars from me," said one man.

"And four from me," said another.

"And two hundred and seventy-five from me," said the third.

"That's twelve hundred and seventy-five dollars you have of our money," said the man who had first accused our hero of cheating, while the real fact was that not more than a hundred dollars had changed hands all round. Our hero saw into the game. The men could not skin him directly through the game, and they must set to rob him by trick and device, making the game the vehicle of their scheme. Well, Bardie was a good man to rob. He was cool as a cucumber, and there was a quiet and amused smile on his sturdy face as he said:

"You fellows claim to be gentlemen?"

"We are."

"And you claim that I have twelve hundred and seventy-five dollars of your money?"

"Yes, that is what you cheated us out of, you scoundrell!"

"There was not more than a hundred dollars changed hands. I may be about seventy-five dollars winner; that I am willing to return."

"You have twelve hundred and seventy-five dollars of our money; and if you do not pay it we will show you up to the passengers on the train."

"You will?"

"Yes. Come, out with the money."

"Do you want your seventy-five dollars?"

"We want all you skinned us out of, you villain!"

"You will get no more out of me than the sum I have named."

"Come, see here; do you know what they do with fellows like you in this country?"

"No."

"They hang 'em. You ain't in York now. You're in the great free West, where men act as their own judges and jurors."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"Then I've the same privilege as others?"

The men looked in each other's faces, and one of them demanded:

"Will you return the money?"

"I've acted on the case as a judge. I instruct the jury to render a verdict against you fellows; and as I am the jury also, I return a verdict in accordance with the instructions of the judge."

"You won't return the money?"

"No."

"See here, you villain, we won't stand any fooling; we intend to have our money."

"You can have your money."

"We want the twelve hundred."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"Well, gentlemen, you will have to get it, that's all."

CHAPTER LXIV.

BARDIE had hardly uttered the words when one of the men drew a cocked revolver. He placed it right under our hero's nose, and in a firm tone said:

"We do not mean to be swindled. Hand over that money, or I shoot!"

Bardie did not flinch. He did not even change color, but in a tone as cool and as determined as that of the man who held the pistol, he said:

"Lower your gun; you can't scare me."

"Give us the money."

"I'll do you harm if you don't lower that gun."

"One!" said the man.

The others sat silent.

"Two!" said the man.

Bardie sat with his eyes fixed on the robber.

"Three!" called the rascal, and as the word

left his mouth he received a blow that knocked him clean out of the car, pistol and all. The day chanced to be warm, and one of the men had drawn the sliding doors of the baggage car, and right through the opening the robber was knocked, and quick as lightning Bardie was on his feet and he dealt the other two men blows that knocked them all in a heap in different corners of the car. It was as though a sudden hurricane had swept in through the open door, or a whirlwind.

The two men who were knocked down attempted to draw their weapons, and Bardie kicked the pistol out of the hands of one of them while the other fired, and the ball dealt our hero a slight wound. The man who fired the shot had leaped to his feet, and was about to fire again when Bardie dealt him a blow, and away he went through the open door of the baggage car. Only one of his assailants remained, and the fellow did not want to be hurled out of the car, but jumped, and our hero remained victor.

He had offered the men their seventy-five dollars; they had refused, and had retired without it, and as our hero did not choose to jump out of the car after them to return it, the money remained with him, and he was just that amount ahead.

The baggage man entered the car, and said:

"Well, you did send them out, didn't you?"

"I think I did."

"They are a bad lot, and here's my hand. I'm glad that for once they caught a Tartar. Those scoundrels in the course of the last few weeks have robbed different passengers out of a sum which in the aggregate will amount to thousands of dollars."

"Well, they did not rob me."

"No; and I am glad of it."

Bardie returned into the car where he had left Gadding asleep, and when his comrade awoke he related his adventure.

The following week the two adventurers reached the city of Mexico, and they had been there but a few hours when Bardie asked:

"What in thunder did we come for?"

Gadding laughed, and did not make any reply.

The two men were greatly amused by the sights they saw in this strange city. Indeed, they appeared to be carried back several centuries. But Bardie was after money; he wanted to make money—a big fortune—and as the prospect seemed, all that remained to him was to spend money.

Gadding of course enjoyed the whole thing, for he was free. He did not expect to meet a detective every step he took.

Bardie could speak both French and Spanish, and consequently had considerable advantage as a stranger in a strange land.

Our two friends had been two weeks in the city when they heard there was to be a grand ball at one of the theaters, and as our hero was fond of adventure, he determined to attend the ball.

A ball in the city of Mexico is a great event, and to a stranger presents a sight that can not be witnessed in any other spot on earth in all its peculiar features.

At the time appointed the doors were flung open. Bardie had secured a masquerade dress and a mask, and he was prepared for anything that might come along. He sauntered into the ball-room along with others, and enjoyed the music of the two bands which played alternately the danza and the Spanish waltz. The Monte-Cristo enjoyed also studying the many different picturesque dresses. All kinds were to be seen; indeed, there were women attired in every style of dress that had ever been invented. It was a gay scene indeed; and as the evening progressed it became one of wild revelry. Nearly every one on the floor became more or less intoxicated, and Bardie danced with the señoritas until he thought he should drop from sheer exhaustion. He did not have to seek for a partner, they sought him, and while standing by he witnessed a strange sight. A man was asked to dance with a woman and he refused, and immediately there followed a desperate fight. Bardie stepped aside, when a lady *en masque* whispered in his ear, speaking in Spanish:

"Come with me."

Bardie immediately offered his arm.

"Will you escort me to my carriage?"

"Certainly I will," answered Bardie.

He had moved but a few paces when a gentleman dressed in Mexican costume stepped before the lady and himself, and the man spoke to the lady in French, and as our hero understood the polite language, he well understood what passed.

"You go away from me?"

"I do, monsieur."

"Who is the gentleman with you?"

"A friend."

The man spoke in tones of suppressed passion.

"You shall not go."

"Pardon me, monsieur, I am offended. Do not bar the way."

"If you go you shall go with me."

"Never!"

"You refuse?"

"I do."

"Think well!"

"I never desire to gaze on your face again."

"You mean what you say?"

"I do."

"Again I warn you. I will hold the gentleman responsible!"

Our hero, as stated, understood every word that passed, but he had remained silent when the man said I will hold your escort responsible. Bardie felt the lady's arm tremble, and she made no answer. It was evident that she did not desire to get the stranger in trouble who had so kindly concurred in becoming her escort. Our hero whispered to her, speaking in French:

"Fear not; the threat of the monsieur is nothing to me."

The lady trembled even more violently and ejaculated in a low tone:

"You are not a Mexican?"

"No, madame."

"You are a gentleman?"

Our hero nodded.

The lady again spoke in Spanish, saying:

"You must excuse me. I did not know when I asked you to act as my escort."
"I am glad you did," came the answer.

CHAPTER LXV.

"I AM grateful," the lady murmured in a low tone, and she added: "I trust the opportunity will come for me to explain."

"You need not fear again," repeated Bardie. The man who had intercepted Bardie and his companion stood by and observed that they were holding a whispered consultation and speaking in Spanish. He said to our hero:

"Commit the lady to my charge!"

"Stand aside!" said Bardie.

Both gentlemen used the Spanish tongue, and when Bardie commanded the gentleman to stand aside the latter advanced and sought to dash his arm between Bardie and the lady, but he received a rap on the ear that clearly knocked him from his feet. With a cry of rage, leaping up and drawing a dagger, he made a furious lunge; but our hero was prepared, and letting loose from the lady, he dealt the man a powerful blow between the eyes.

At once the music stopped, and the motley crowd of dancers crowded around to witness the combat. Already one man had been killed in a fracas in that wild gathering that night; but the blow our hero struck ended the matter for the time being between him and his antagonist. He had struck the man with such force he lay stunned where he fell until some one ran to raise him to his feet.

Bardie meantime had again offered his arm to the lady and started with her to leave the hall, and when once outside the lady muttered:

"Oh, what shall I do?"

"What do you mean, madame?"

"That man will seek me out. He will kill me!"

"Can you not put yourself under police protection?"

"In this land?"

"You are not a Mexican lady?"

"I am not."

"French?"

"Yes."

"Will you permit me to escort you to your home?"

"Oh, I do not know what to do!"

"Madame, I will tell you; I am an Irishman."

"An Irishman?"

"Yes."

"How strange! You speak English?"

"Most Irishmen do, madame, unless they be born in Paris."

The lady at once spoke in English, and when our hero expressed his surprise, she said:

"It is safer for us to talk in English. We are less likely to be understood, and if we are we have nothing to fear from English-speaking people."

"I think you are right."

They had reached the lady's carriage. A woman sat in the coach, to whom the lady spoke in French, saying:

"I have been so imprudent."

"You met him, madame?"

"I did."

"I feared your coming here."

"It matters not. He had already learned my address."

"And he will come to the house?"

"I fear so—yes."

"Oh, what shall we do?"

"Madame, will you trust me?"

"Oh, sir, I do not know what to do!"

"Hire me as your servant."

"But you are not a servant, sir."

"I can act as one for one night."

The lady, who was very bright, appeared to grasp his idea.

"Will you volunteer?" she asked.

"Certainly, and most gladly."

"Will you enter the carriage?"

"No; I will ride with the driver. Servants do not ride inside a coach with their masters."

The lady and our hero had resumed the conversation in English.

"As you will," she said.

The lady entered the carriage, and Bardie leaped up beside the driver. He saw that it was a hired vehicle. The man drove to a house and brought his horses to a halt. The lady alighted, assisted from the carriage by our hero; then he followed her into the house. Once inside she sent her maid away, and said to our hero

"It is not right for me to ask you to run the risk of remaining here."

"What will you do, madame?"

"Oh, I do not know."

"Why does that man pursue you?"

"He has a purpose."

"You are determined not to be reconciled to him?"

"The man is a villain."

"And can you not enter a complaint against him? There must be law and protection even in Mexico."

"I dare not face the notoriety."

"What will you do?"

"I must leave Mexico."

"The man may follow."

"He has followed me already from Paris."

"Madame, go you to your rest; leave me here; if that man comes here I will meet him."

"He will come prepared. He will assail you."

"So much the worse for him, so much the better for you. If he attempts to kill me I will kill him; then you need not leave Mexico."

"You are a brave man."

"I do not fear the man who is your enemy."

"He will not come to-night."

"And you would prefer that I should not remain?"

"I can not expect you to remain here."

The lady had removed her mask. She was beautiful, and not over thirty. Our hero was charmed. He also had removed his mask.

"I am perfectly willing to remain here on guard, madame; and it may be better that I meet this man. With your permission I will act as your protector against him."

"I prefer that you go."

"And may I come here to-morrow?"

"If you choose—yes."

"As my presence is undesirable I will go."

"And you will come to-morrow?"

"I will with your permission."

"I may reveal to you why this man pursues me."

"You are not bound to make a revelation; it is enough that he is forcing himself upon your attention."

"You are very gallant and brave."

"It is but a pleasure to me to defend you. I am without a tie in the world, a Don Quixote abroad seeking adventures. I am delighted to meet with one that promises to prove as interesting as this one."

A moment the lady was lost in deep meditation, but after an interval she said:

"To-morrow you shall come and tell me your story."

"Then you think I have a history?"

"From what you have said I so suspect."

"I will be proud to tell my strange story to you."

"And you shall learn my history. I have indeed a strange story to tell. Are you rich?"

"No."

The lady's face assumed a bright look as she said:

"You may be the man I am seeking."

"I believe I am, madame," came the ready answer.

"Then to-morrow we exchange confidences."

"So be it, madame."

CHAPTER LXVI.

It was well on toward daylight, and when our hero left the lady's house he loitered near by. He suspected that the man whom she feared might turn up, and he was determined to be on hand.

When daylight came and the man had not appeared, our hero returned to his pension, where he met his comrade Gadding.

"Well," ejaculated the latter, "you have returned?"

"I have."

"My dear man, I was worried to death."

"You were?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I thought you were certainly killed. I lost sight of you at the ball and did not learn, until I had lost all trace of you, that a man had been killed, and it was said the dead man was a Gringo."

"That is what the Mexicans call the Americans?"

"Yes."

"I am all right."

"And I am glad. Hang you, you are such a venturesome chap no one knows just when you are likely to get into trouble."

"I have as good a chance for getting out as getting in it."

"It would appear so."

"I met with quite an adventure last night."

"You did?"

"I did."

"Well?" came the exclamation interrogatively.

Our hero told what had befallen him.

"You have the luck of running into strange adventures."

"Yes; and I reckon that is why some of my friends used to call me the Irish Monte-Cristo. I've had so much of one kind of the Frenchman's luck I wish I could fall into some of the other."

"You would like to find a gold mine?"

"Yes."

"I reckon that is a dream."

"Is it?"

"Yes."

"We shall see. I have not lost all hope yet."

Our hero retired for a good long nap, and at the proper time, as he reckoned, he arose and proceeded to the house where he was to exchange confidences with the lovely lady to whom he had acted as escort upon the previous night. He reached the house, but on entering he observed that he was being dogged by a Mexican.

"I wonder what that fellow is following me for?" was his muttered query.

He could ask the question, but at the time could not answer it, so he just went on about his business, believing that in good time the little mystery would be solved.

He reached the lady's house as stated, and was shown into the room called the parlor by Americans; and it may not be out of place right here to describe a Mexican home. The houses are square, plastered outside and decorated, and many are three and four stories in height. The windows, which are always curtained, are finished with iron balconies. Massive doors, on which are ponderous knockers of antique shape and size, keep from view the dwellers in the casa. When one visits a Mexican house he knocks, and a door swings open, and usually a brown *portero* dressed in the garb of his country, sombrero, serape and all, admits you to the lower court, where as a rule the stables are kept and the servants live in a well-equipped establishment.

Our hero was compelled to wait some time before he was joined by the fair senorita whom he had championed, but in good time she put in an appearance, looking bright and beautiful, and she was all smiles and cordiality as she greeted Bardie. The latter was delighted. Like all Irishmen, he was very gallant, and a great admirer of the fair sex.

The lady appeared to take great delight in speaking English, and it was in the latter tongue that she addressed our hero, asking:

"You are well after the night's revel?"

"I am; and I need not return the question, madame, for you look fresh and charming."

"Do you know I am aware of your devotion to my safety?"

"Indeed!"

"I am aware that you stood guard over my house until daylight."

"Who told you, madame?"

"It matters not; but you were very good and brave."

"I feared your enemy might put in an appearance."

"I am not really sure that he knows just where my home is, but I fear he does."

"He did not come?"

"No."

"It would have been well if he had come, for he would have learned, once for all, that he was not to come again."

"Oh, I trust no evil will come of my meeting with you!"

"You need not fear."

"You will not be offended if I offer a frank explanation?"

"Certainly not."

"I really had no business to go to that ball, but I had a great curiosity to do so; and as it was to be *en masque* I thought I could do so in safety."

"You went unaccompanied?"

"I did."

"It was a daring and rash thing to do."

"I know it now, especially as I was aware that I had a bitter enemy in this city who has followed me from France."

"You know the old adage, all's well that ends well?"

"Ah, but I fear the end has not come."
 "I shall end well, madame, never fear."
 "I arrived at the ball-room," continued the lady, "and was enjoying the scene, and did not observe how time was passing. I had intended to leave in a few moments, but after a time I discovered that I was being followed, and later on I recognized the man who was following me as my letter foe. I did not know what to do. I did not dare leave at once lest he might follow and discover more than I desired to have him learn as concerned my helpless position here in this city. I moved from point to point trying to lose him in the crowd, but he followed me closely, and at length addressed me. He let me know that I was recognized. I sought to flee from him. I pretended not to understand him when he addressed me in French, but he made me understand that I could not deceive him; then I saw you. I thought you were a Mexican, and that I might secure you as a foil to the man who followed me, and you know what afterward transpired. Had I known you were a gentleman I would not have dared to have accosted you."
 "It is fortunate, madame, that you did accost me, and it is an augury of your good fortune to come, for I am in just the position to defend you against this man."

"You were to tell me your history."
 "And you were to tell me yours."
 "Can I first hear your narrative?"
 "You can."

Our hero proceeded and related the prominent incidents of his career, and the lady listened with a great deal of interest, and when he had concluded exclaimed:

"How fortunate!"

CHAPTER LXVII.

"Ah, I told you, madame, your meeting with me was fortunate."

"It is indeed; you are a Monte-Cristo."

"Yes, I have been called the Irish Monte-Cristo."

"It may be that through your meeting with me you will become a Monte Cristo indeed!"

Our hero stared in amazement.

"I have a very strange story to tell, and I now feel that my meeting with you is fate."

"You flatter me, madame."

"I but speak what I feel."

"Tell my your history."

"My father was a soldier in the French army. He died, and my mother, who was an English woman, opened a pension in Paris, and it was because of our many boarders that I am able to converse in so many different languages. It became a matter of business for me to acquire them. French is my native tongue, English I learned from my mother, and Italian and Spanish I learned through study and association with our boarders from those countries."

"It is a great thing to speak many different languages," said Bardie.

"Yes, and I observe that you are a linguist."

"Yes; and in that I resemble the real Monte-Cristo; but proceed with your story."

"The most remarkable part of my story is to come."

"And I am all curiosity."

"About twenty years after my father's death there came an old man to live at our house, and after he had been a dweller with us for a number of months he told me that he had been attracted by the name, and stated further that he had known my father and had served in the same regiment with him, and he said also that he felt like one of the family."

"Why did he make that announcement?"

"I will explain. My mother had died and I was married, but I was continuing the business under my mother's name. You know it is a common thing to do the like in France."

"Yes, I know it is," assented our hero.

"The old gentleman waited to assure himself as to my identity and when he learned that I was indeed the daughter of his former comrade he made the announcement, and because of his former friendship for my father I did all I could to make him comfortable, and he appeared very grateful for my attentions."

"Is the old man living?" asked Bardie.

"No, he died in his bed, died suddenly and unexpectedly. It appears that he expected to come to America, old as he was, and the purpose that would have brought him here in the possession of my being in this land. I told you the old man died in his bed suddenly, and he left a letter for me. You can read French!"

"I will let you read the letter first before submitting to you the other papers that were left in my charge. It appears the old man had anticipated his death, and for several days had been engaged writing the letter to me."

Bardie received the letter and read it. We will not reproduce the letter verbatim, but merely indicate the principal revelations.

The old man told how he had made the acquaintance of a comrade in the army and that when his comrade died he had told of a cave filled with gold. He did not tell how he had learned about the cave full of gold, nor did he explain why he had not availed himself of its great wealth, but he confided to the old man a map whereby he could find the cave which he said was filled with bars of virgin gold. In his letter the old man went on to say that he had longed to be able to go to Mexico and find the gold, but death was coming upon him and he had determined to confide the secret to the daughter of his old friend. In the letter the old man revealed where Mme. Nerac would find the map and a full description of the place where the cave was located.

Bardie, as stated, finished reading the letter and asked:

"Have you the map?"

"I have."

"And do you believe there is any truth in the old man's wild story?"

"I do, or I would never have come to this wild country to find the treasure cave."

"How long ago did this old man die, madame?"

"Three years ago."

"And why did you delay so long coming here?"

"My husband was an invalid, and I remained to care for him until he died."

"Did you ever reveal the wild story to your husband?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"He was too great an invalid ever to have made the journey to this land. He was a doomed man, and the information would have worried him."

"Did you ever reveal the secret to any one?"

"I never did."

"Who is the man whom I assailed at the ball?"

A blush mantled the handsome face of Mme. Nerac; but after a moment she said:

"That man, by some strange method, has found out that I possess a secret of some hidden wealth."

"Does he know the truth?"

"No, he does not; and how he came to suspect the truth at all I do not know; but he made my acquaintance under strange circumstances."

"Under strange circumstances?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"At a mask ball in Paris, and he came and whispered strange and ominous words in my ear. I think at first it was his intention to make it appear that he was a relative of the old gentleman who bequeathed the secret to me; failing in that, he sought to claim my love, and failing once again, he has since sought to intimidate me. I fled from Paris to avoid him, and he has followed me even here. He hovers over me like a shadow. He has threatened me, and indeed I believe he did murder a man whom he suspected of having found favor in my eyes."

"What do you know of him further?"

"I have heard that he has been a brigand and a pirate, and I fear he will seek to do you harm, and then—"

The lady stopped.

"Well, what then?"

"In this land I will be at his mercy."

"You think he will kill me?"

"I fear he will."

"You can dismiss the fear. I am the equal of a dozen ex-brigands and pirates. What is his name?"

"Jean Fenier."

"Good. I will take care of Jean. You will not be troubled with him; and now answer me: you have confided much to me, do you intend to trust me still further?"

"I do."

"You have located the mines?"

"I have not; all I know is that they are somewhere here in Mexico."

"You have the map?"

"Yes."

"And you will trust it to me?"

"I will."

"We will come to a perfect understanding."

"Yes, I feel that I can trust you."

"Madame, you can."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

MADAME NERAC handed to the Monte-Cristo a little ebony box.

"The papers are all here," she said.

"You keep the box, let me keep the papers," said our hero.

Mme. Nerac assented and opened the box.

"With your permission I will look over them here," said our hero.

The papers were records in Spanish, and Bardie sat down, and spreading them out upon a table, commenced a study of them. He was engaged two hours, and finally said when the madame rejoined him:

"Madame, these mines, or rather these caves, are not situated in Mexico."

The madame looked amazed.

"What led you to think they were situated in Mexico?"

The madame pointed out where several mountains in Mexico were mentioned, and other localities.

"I can see," said Bardie, "how you could make the mistake; but let me explain to you this is a wonderful record, and it was made by a very learned man, and the exact spot where these wonderful caves are located is plainly indicated."

The lady's eyes brightened, and there came a glow to her face like an expression of extreme delight.

"Madame, it is plain that there were no natural bearings by which the discoverer of these caves could locate them, but he has done so astronomically by exact points in the heavens. It is an ingenious method. It is evident that the caves are situated in some wild, uninhabited region, and the mountains mentioned as located in Mexico are merely indicating points."

"How fortunate is my meeting with you."

"Yes."

"You can find the caves?"

"I can find the locality indicated on this chart, but I will have to make certain calculations, and then I can go there as a navigator would sail his ship to a certain point."

"And can you make the calculations?"

"I can, most certainly."

"And we will go to the mines?"

"That is a matter we must talk over. I do not think a woman could make the journey; but now, mark me, suppose the story here told is true. Suppose I find these treasure caves and recover the treasure, how are we to arrange as to a division?"

"We will make it a partnership."

"Then there must be three partners, as I have a companion who will go with me."

"And I will go."

"No, madame; you can not go. There will be many perils to be encountered in the recovery of this treasure."

"What do you propose?"

"I will tell you. I'm satisfied these treasure caves are located in one of the territories of the United States."

"And you mean for me to remain here?"

"Yes."

"I can not do that. Indeed, I'd like to leave this horrid land this very day."

"You can go to California, to San Francisco."

"That man will follow me. Let me go into the wilderness with you."

"No I will never consent to that."

The madame fixed her lovely eyes on our hero in a strange manner. The latter smiled and said:

"You can trust me with your fortune as you would your life, madame."

"I will never doubt you again; but that man, Jean Fenier, he will follow me wherever I go."

"I will attend to him."

"He may kill you."

"I rather think he will attempt to do so."

"And then what will become of me?"

"I guess he will attempt to kill me, but he shall not succeed. I am not about to permit an ex-brigand to assassinate me at his pleasure."

"But he is such a wily and treacherous man."

"But he has shown his hand already."

"He has?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"I was tracked when I came here to-day. He has evidently located me."

"And means to do you harm?"

"No doubt, but he will run into a snare. Now, madame, we will talk matters over at our leisure. I will take these papers away with me to-night. I will make the proper calculations, and with a map lay out our course, and if these caves with these immense treasures are in existence I shall find them."

A moment the madame remained silent, but at length she said:

"I have another revelation to make."

"Proceed; tell me all."

"I am in your hands. I must confess to you the romance of my life."

Our hero smiled. He was a man of wonderfully quick apprehension, and he discerned that the fair widow was about to make a revelation that should serve as a warning to him not to fall in love with her.

"You can trust me as though I were your own brother," he said.

There came a glad look to her face, and she said:

"It is as a brother alone I will trust you."

"Certainly, that will be understood."

Our hero spoke with peculiar emphasis.

"There is now no need for me to tell you more. All is understood," said the widow.

"No, you must make to me the revelation," said Bardie, a merry twinkle in his handsome eyes.

"I am engaged to be married."

"I thought so," said Bardie.

"That is all."

"No, it is not all. You intimated there was a woman connected with this engagement. I am so fond of romantic tales you must tell me all."

"If you insist I will."

"I insist."

"When I was very young there came to board with my mother a young man, who belonged to one of the noblest families in France. I was but the daughter of a poor soldier, the child of the keeper of a pension, but he fell in love with me. He was poor. My mother would not consent to the marriage, and I was forced to marry a tradesman, a merchant, who was doing a thriving business, but I always loved my Louis."

The madame stopped, and our hero said, impatiently:

"Proceed."

"My Louis is still unmarried, and his ancestral estates are in the market. It will take millions of francs to buy them."

Again the widow stopped, and again Bardie said:

"Proceed."

"He still loves me."

"Yes."

"He will marry me."

"Well?"

"I fled away from Paris."

"I see."

"I hope to find these treasure caves."

"Yes?"

"If I succeed I will not go to Paris dowerless."

"You wish to present him his ancestral estates?"

"It is a wild dream, but that is the dream I cherish."

"Your dream may be realized."

"You really think so?"

"I do."

"Then you hope to find the treasure caves?"

"I do," came the answer.

CHAPTER LXIX.

AGAIN there came a look of indescribable grief to the widow's face. She exclaimed:

"Oh, it is too wild a dream!"

"Listen. As sure as I am talking to you at this moment I truly believe that the treasure caves exist."

"And that the gold is in them?"

"Yes."

"And you will find them?"

"I will if they exist. There is something strange in all this, but I really believe it is our destiny to find them. Stranger things have happened. This is a land of gold and silver, and it is all within the range of possibility and practicability that we shall find these treasures."

"But, I fear."

"Fear what?"

"I should die of joy were I ever able to buy the ancestral estates of my Louis."

"We will wait and see what will come."

"What shall we do?"

"Nothing until after I have made the calculations."

"Have you read the whole narrative?"

"No, but I will, for I have just studied out the location. Now I will go away, but I think it will be wise for you to change your mind."

"No, we will soon leave Mexico. We must leave. We must escape from Jean Fenier."

"I will attend to his case. Let me see; after all, you need not fear him. I rather think he will seek to dispose of me, then he will seek to find you again. He has not your secret. He will do you no bodily harm. When he learns it then I will have disposed of him."

"When shall I see you again?"

"Possibly to-night."

Bardie left the widow's house and returned to his own lodgings, where he found Gadding awaiting him, and to his comrade he said:

"It's all right, old man."

"Ah, what now?"

"We have found the lost mines."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say."

"Do not talk in riddles."

"I'm not talking in riddles."

"Then explain."

Our hero told his wonderful story, and when he had concluded Gadding exclaimed:

"This is all very extraordinary."

"I should say it was, but I always felt I should be a genuine Monte-Cristo some day."

"And do you really believe there is anything in it all?"

"I do, as sure as I am talking to you at this moment."

"It is all a wild dream."

"It may seem so, but I intend to make it a living reality."

"And you expect to find all this gold?"

"I do, and now listen. I want you to serve me."

"I will."

"I have some hard calculations to make."

"I can not aid you there."

"No, but I want you to stand guard over the widow's house."

"I can do that."

"That is all I desire you to do at present."

Our hero explained to Gadding how he could find the widow's house, and gave him other directions as to how he was to act under certain circumstances. Gadding started off to keep his vigil, and our hero sat down to his calculations. He had been engaged about three hours, and rising to his feet exclaimed, "Eureka!" and at the same instant a hand was laid upon his shoulder. Our hero turned and saw a dark-faced man standing in his room. Speaking in Spanish, Bardie exclaimed:

"Where did you come from?"

"I knocked, and you did not attend."

"I did not hear you."

"It is all the same, I'm here."

"Yes, you are here, and what do you want?"

"Your name is Bergenza?"

The latter was the assumed name under which Bardie was traveling in Mexico.

"That is my name."

"You claim to be a gentleman?"

"I do."

"I come to represent a gentleman."

"Well?"

"You grossly insulted a friend of mine last night."

"Oh, you mean the fellow I knocked down at the ball?"

"Yes, the gentleman whom you assailed at the ball."

"I served him right under the circumstances."

"No, sir; you did not."

"You may have your opinion, I have mine."

"It is possible you may have had the right to act in the lady's behalf."

"I did have the right."

"If you can prove that the gentleman whom I represent has no complaint to make—"

"Well, what do you wish me to say?"

"I wish you to explain your right to act for the lady."

"I had the right."

"Will you explain your right?"

"No."

"You refuse?"

"I do."

"I warn you, sir, it will be better that you should do so."

"I have no explanations to make to a stranger."

"The gentleman is not a stranger to the lady."

"I know better; and now, sir, as you have been refused all information, I will excuse you."

"You will excuse me?"

"Yes, you can go."

"You must make an explanation or render the gentleman satisfaction."

"I must?"

"Yes, or you will go to jail, and you would rather die, I know, than rot in a jail in Mexico."

"Oh, you wish to scare me into a duel."

"I wish to afford you a gentleman's opportunity."

"I am willing to accept the opportunity."

"And you will render satisfaction to the gentleman?"

"If it will be any satisfaction to him to let me kill him he shall have that satisfaction with pleasure."

Our hero's visitor stared.

"Sir," said he, "you are not speaking seriously?"

"I am."

"Do you understand what I seek?"

"Yes."

"What, sir?"

"A funeral, I think."

"You admit you insulted my friend?"

"I did not. I knocked him down, and I think he deserved it, but if he wants to be knocked down again I shall accommodate him."

"You will meet him?"

"Certainly."

"With weapons?"

"Yes, sir."

"When?"

"Any time that is agreeable to him."

"Have you a friend to whom you can refer me?"

"I'm a stranger in Mexico, my only friend is not here at present. You can meet him here this evening."

"At what hour?"

Our hero named an hour.

"I will come."

"All right, sir; adieu."

The stranger left his card and departed.

"Well," muttered Bardie, "it is coming about just as I desired, and I will have that fellow Jean in an hospital before to-morrow's sunrise unless this whole affair is a bluff."

And it turned out it was no bluff.

CHAPTER LXX.

BARDIE had made a careful calculation, and his original suspicions were confirmed. He demonstrated beyond all question that the original discoverer of the treasure caves had located them for a subsequent visit by astronomical calculations. The exact spot was not thus located, but a general knowledge of their bearings served as a direct guide to the secret caves.

The manuscript gave a recital of the manner in which the original discoverer had made his discovery. The party claimed that he was taken prisoner by a tribe of Indians, that he dwelt with them a number of years, and he also related how he had saved himself from being murdered.

As it appeared in the narrative, at the time he had been taken prisoner he was doomed to be burned at the stake. The sacrificial pyre had already been built, when the doomed man, who was an able astronomical student, remembered that upon the very day that he was doomed to die there was to occur an eclipse of the sun, and at once he determined to take advantage of the superstitious credulity of the savages, and saved his life. He sent for the chief, and informed him that the Great Spirit did not desire that he should die, and he told the chief that the Great Spirit would that day express his displeasure and frown upon the contemplated burning. Then at the hour set for the sacrifice the sun would hide its face under a veil, and thereby the red man would know that the Great Spirit expressed his displeasure.

It so happened that the eclipse was to commence at about the very hour that the victim was to be burned.

The chief was greatly impressed at what the white man had said, and went forth and consulted with his medicine man and his braves, and it was determined to wait and see if the prediction of the doomed man would be verified.

The man was bound to the stake, but the torch was not applied, and all the red men were assembled to behold the verification of his prediction. The prisoner facetiously stated that

It was not a cloudy day an astronomical incident would save his life, as upon the certainty of the eclipse his fate depended.

The moon and the eclipse were at the appointed time to the second. The veiling commenced to come and at the first sign of the obscuration the Indians set up a great shout. They ran to the prisoner and unbound him, and when the obscuration became almost total he was looked upon as a special favorite of the Great Spirit, and from that moment became a great power among the savages.

In his narrative the relater stated that he found a fondness for the wild life, and became practically a member of the tribe, and on one of his wanderings in the remote fastnesses of the mountains discovered the treasure caves, and then it was he determined to escape from the Indians and avail himself of his wonderful discovery. He did escape, but upon his return to France was taken ill, and confided his manuscript and the secret of his discovery to a relative. The latter was a conscript, and was mortally wounded in an engagement, and he in turn confided the secret to a comrade, and the latter was the party who confided it to Mme. Nerac, and thus some of the preceding possessors of the wonderful manuscript had been enabled to avail themselves of the strange secret.

Our hero awaited the return of Gadding, and when the latter returned Bardie said:

"Tom, there is no doubt in my mind but that we are to become millionaires. I have studied the manuscript and the charts, and I am satisfied I can find the lost caves."

"And you will attempt to do so?"

"I will."

"Am I to go with you?"

"If you choose."

"I will go anywhere with you."

"All right; and now tell me, did any one appear at the house?"

"Yes, there was a man who came prowling around."

"Did he enter the house?"

"No."

"He had it under surveillance?"

"Yes."

"Did he see you?"

"Yes."

"Did he address you?"

"No."

"Nor you him?"

"No."

"You are certain he saw you?"

"Yes."

"Did the owner of the house see you?"

"I think not. She came out upon the balcony, and I think saw the prowler."

"But did not see you?"

"No."

"Did the man attempt to enter the house?"

"No."

"All right. I am going there now to make an arrangement with her, but in the meantime I have other business on hand. I am going to fight a duel."

"You are going to fight a duel?"

"Yes."

"With whom?"

"The fellow with whom I had the fracas at the ball."

"You will not be such a fool."

"I am going to be just such a fool."

"You will be killed."

"Will I?"

"Yes."

"We shall see."

"The duel is not necessary."

"Yes, it is."

"How?"

"This man is upon our track. We can not avoid him. He will trail us wherever we go."

"And you will seek to kill him?"

"No, he seeks to kill me."

"You are not acting wisely."

"My dear old fellow, have you confidence in me?"

"Yes."

"In my honor?"

"Yes."

"In my wisdom?"

"Yes."

"You do not consider me a blood-thirsty man?"

"No."

"Then listen. I propose to act wisely in this matter, and you can trust my good judgment."

"I know you to be rash at times."

"I have fully considered what I'm about to do."

"I do not flee away!"

"No."

"Very well, I'm willing to abide your good judgment."

"I thought you would, and you must aid me."

"Act as your second?"

"Yes."

"I will."

"The man was here to see me while you were gone."

"The man himself?"

"No, his representative."

"Well?"

"He will come again to confer with you."

"And what am I to do?"

"Make all the preliminary arrangements. Let him choose the weapons, name the hour; indeed, settle the whole business to suit himself."

"And you mean to let him murder you?"

"No, I will take care of myself."

"Very well; as we are in for it I will obey your instructions."

"Good, and I will convert the whole affair into a farce. I have settled upon a plan."

CHAPTER LXXI.

BARDIE proceeded to the home of Mme. Nerac, and was kindly greeted. The lady said:

"My house has been under a strict espionage all the afternoon."

"And who was it who kept it under surveillance?"

"Jean Fenier."

"You recognized him?"

"I did; and I was frightened almost to death. I feared that at any moment he might seek to reach my presence."

"He did not dare enter."

"Ah, you do not know him. He is a very daring man."

"But he was well aware that you had a protector near you?"

"Were you watching?"

"No; but a friend on whom I can depend was present to guard you."

"Oh, how thoughtful you are!"

"We are living in a country where it is just as well to be on the watch when one has an enemy; but now let me tell you I am fully assured that the treasure caves are in existence."

"But can we find them?"

"I can; but it is no journey for a woman. I am satisfied they are located in the remotest fastnesses of the mountains, probably in a quarter where the foot of white man has rarely trod, and where the most hostile Indians roam at will."

Again there came a strange doubting expression to the face of Mme. Nerac. Our hero discerned the glance of suspicion and said:

"You must trust me now."

"What do you mean?"

"Your secret is mine."

"Yes."

"And I have no desire to take advantage of your confidence. I will talk plainly to you. If I had sought to take advantage I could have gone away carrying the documents with me."

"That is so."

"You have seen fit to trust me. I will not betray your trust. I will run all the risks, encounter all the perils; and if I am successful I will make a fair and equitable division with you of all the proceeds."

"Certainly. I have not doubted your honor."

"Oh, yes; a suspicion has entered your mind."

"When I tell you it is no journey for a woman you are led to believe I have some ulterior motive; but no, I am merely telling you the truth. And now mark me, by to-morrow's sunrise I will have proved my fairness and honor."

"I do not doubt your honor."

"Fenier has found me out."

"Ah, I feared he would."

"And I hoped he would."

"He will seek to take your life."

"He has challenged me."

"You will not accept the challenge?"

"Oh, yes, I have accepted the challenge."

"He will kill you. He is a noted duelist."

"I do not fear him."

"You do not know him."

"He will know and remember me after to-night."

"You fight to-night?"

"Yes."

"Oh, do not meet him!"

"What shall we do?"

"Let us flee away."

"You fled from Paris?"

"Yes."

"And he followed you?"

"Yes."

"He will follow us again. It is better to settle the matter here and now."

"But he will kill you. He is a terrible man."

"So am I."

"But you are an honorable man. He is a dishonorable duelist."

"I will be on my guard."

"It is better that we flee away."

"I tell you he will pursue us."

"If we go to California we may manage to evade him."

"I do not wish to evade him. I wish to settle him, and I will."

"You will not be persuaded?"

"No, I will not fail in my word. I have agreed to meet him."

"With what weapons will you fight?"

"I have left the choice to him."

"He will name swords."

"Well?"

"He is an expert."

"Is he?"

"He is, I am sure."

"All right. He will discover that I am not awkward at that play."

"You are a very remarkable man."

"Yes, that may be. I want you to buy those estates for your Louis."

"If you perish I am lost. That man will have me in his power."

"Fenier?"

"Yes."

"Let not your mind be troubled; I am equal to a dozen Feniers. I really will enjoy the strange adventure. I have fought duels before now. I fought dozens of them when in college."

"Yes, but this will be different—a duel to the death."

"Ah, no."

"What then?"

"A duel to the hospital."

"I do not understand."

"If Jean Fenier is in the hospital he can not follow us."

"Certainly not."

"He will be in the hospital before to-morrow's sunrise. And now listen to me: what are your arrangements for leaving?"

"I can leave here at an hour's notice."

"You can leave at sunrise?"

"I can."

"And will you be ready?"

"In what direction will you go?"

"To California."

"And do you know how to travel there from here?"

"I do. I've studied out the way."

"And you will take me with you?"

"Yes, to Omaha, where I shall expect you to remain while I go on and find the treasure caves."

"Jean will follow us."

"You forget you will be in the United States. A man can not assail you there as he can in this strange land."

Bardie made positive and specific arrangements with Mme. Nerac, and then returned to his lodgings, where Gadding awaited him.

"Did you receive a visitor?" asked our hero.

"I did."

"And are all the arrangements made?"

"Yes."

"When are we to meet?"

"At daylight to-morrow."

"And who is to be present?"

"It is arranged that only the principals and the seconds are to be present."

"And the weapons?"

"Swords."

"And the place where we are to meet is agreed upon?"

"Yes. I have been to the place."

"The fellow means murder."

"That is my idea."

"Very well, I will teach them a lesson."

"You recognize the fact that he means murder?"

"I do."

"Then why meet him?"

"It suits my own purpose."

"You take a great risk."

"All right. I am prepared for all the risks."

"Your usual luck may carry you through, Bardie."

"Bah! It is not a question of luck. I know just what I am about, and in a few months you and I will be Monte Cristoes indeed, and don't you forget it, my boy."

CHAPTER LXXII.

BARDIE retired to rest as unconcernedly as though he were to arise in the morning and take an early train instead of anticipating a deadly combat. He slept peacefully and well, and when aroused by his comrade was as fresh and vigorous as ever in his life.

"If you are determined to meet this man it is time for us to go."

"I am determined to meet him!"

The two men proceeded to the appointed place, and upon their arrival found it a most excellent spot for a deadly combat.

Bardie's antagonist and his friend were already on the ground, and, as it appeared, the two men were not red hot, as the term goes, for the combat.

The principal's friend had discovered during his interview with Gadding that the latter was an American, and the preparations were necessarily discussed in English, as the man had a slight command of the language. He had asked Gadding if Bardie was an American, and our hero's comrade had answered that he was an Irishman. The man's face was shadowed upon hearing the announcement, and upon the arrival of our hero and Gadding the second approached and said, speaking in broken English:

"This combat can be avoided."

"All right," said Gadding: "it is not of our seeking."

"Your friend can offer an apology and leave the city of Mexico, and his life will be spared."

"I will make your statement known to my friend."

"Do so."

Gadding repeated the man's proposition verbatim, and Bardie answered:

"Tell him that I return the offer. I am here to fight, having been summoned; but if the other man desires to back down he can do so by leaving the city of Mexico at once."

Gadding repeated Bardie's answer, and the man said:

"Your principal insists upon a combat?"

"That is what he is here for."

"Will you permit me to speak to him?"

"Certainly."

The man approached Bardie, and said, speaking in Spanish:

"My friend would spare your life."

"He is very kind."

"He believes that your interference was an involuntary act. He does not desire to force you into a combat."

"I am here at his summons and command."

"He did not at the time understand all the circumstances. He is willing to make explanations that may cause you to become his friend."

"I have reason to believe that he is a villain. I have no desire to cultivate his friendship. He summoned me here to mortal combat, and I am here; let the fight go on."

"He would spare your life."

"He will have enough to do to save his own."

"He has selected swords as the weapons."

"My favorite weapon. I will kill him."

Bardie spoke in a very confident tone.

"You wish the combat to go on?"

"I do."

"Your blood be upon your own head!"

"I am prepared to take all the responsibility."

The man reported back the result of the interview; the two men held a few moments' consultation, and the second again approaching, said:

"As your friend is determined to fight, the combat shall go on."

"My friend did not seek this quarrel. He is here at the command of your friend, whose name, I understand, is Jean Fenier."

Bardie had instructed Gadding as to his answer, as the man laid claim to another name. When Gadding mentioned the name of Fenier, the second of the challenger said:

"You are really laboring under some mistake."

Bardie overheard the remark and said:

"I am not laboring under any mistake. I'm fully aware of the real identity of my proposed antagonist, and now let the combat proceed. We are losing time."

"But there is some mistake here."

"Then the mistake has been made by your principal. We know exactly where we stand."

The second again returned and consulted with his principal, and it was apparent that they were holding quite a heated argument, and Bardie remarked:

"That was a good shot, unmasking that fellow."

A third time the second of Fenier returned and asked:

"Did you come prepared with weapons?"

"No. We expected you would be provided with them."

"Will your principal accept a choice of our swords?"

"Certainly. One weapon is as good as another to him."

The two men immediately commenced making preparations for the fight, and a few moments later they were face to face, all the preliminaries having been well arranged.

Bardie had tested his choice of the weapons and was well satisfied.

When the two men faced each other, Fenier said:

"You were told my name is Jean Fenier?"

"Yes."

"Who told you?"

"One who knows you well."

"You have been misinformed."

"We did not come here to discuss information."

"I am reluctant to kill you."

"Indeed?"

"I feel you are being misled. I have no real quarrel with you."

"You have forced a quarrel upon me."

"It is not yet too late to come to an amicable understanding."

"It is for you to make the proposition."

"I will waive the apology if you will agree to leave Mexico."

"I propose to leave Mexico after this duel."

"But you will die if we fight."

Bardie pointed to his weapon, and said:

"This will decide that question."

"Can I ask you a question?"

"Certainly."

"Had you any previous acquaintance with the lady whom you served as escort at the ball?"

"That is none of your business."

"It is a fair question."

"I decline to answer it."

"Then I am to conclude that you never saw her before that occasion; and it is only proper that I should tell you that you have been grossly deceived."

"Have you anything further to impart?"

"What do you mean?"

"We are losing time."

"You are anxious for the fight?"

"I am anxious to get away from here."

"Let me impress upon you that if we fight you will never leave here."

"You are a boaster. Make good your words."

I am impatient."

"I have exhausted every means to avert this combat."

"You first solicited the quarrel, and I am here to answer your demand."

"So be it; and let the consequences be upon your own head."

CHAPTER LXXIII.

THE combat began, and after a few passes and counter-passes there came a change over the Frenchman's face; first it was a look of surprise, then one of anxiety, and finally there came an expression of abject terror. He had learned within a few moments that he was pitted against a man who was his superior at the sword-play; a man who really was playing with him, and who could at his will end the contest, and then it was the real intention of the miserable scoundrel was betrayed. He leaped back quickly, cast aside his sword, and drew a ready cocked revolver. There was no mistaking his purpose. He intended a cold-blooded murder. The whole incident was but the act of a moment, when our hero, in order to save his life, was compelled to sacrifice that of the would-be assassin. The murderer raised the weapon, and it was discharged, but the bullet went skyward as the treacherous rascal fell to the ground pierced to the heart.

Bardie had not anticipated the tragedy. He had entered the combat intending to terminate the duel French fashion. He intended merely to wound his antagonist, but he was compelled to make it end in a tragedy. His act was one of self-defense, the same as though he had been assaulted by an assassin upon the street.

The second of Jean Fenier stood aghast. Bardie approached him and said:

"That man was a murderer."

"I did not know it. He represented himself to me as a gentleman."

"You were his confederate."

The man turned deathly pale and said:

"No, I am innocent."

Bardie raised his sword.

"Do you surrender?"

"You will not kill me. I am innocent."

"Will you surrender?"

"I will."

Gadding approached, and asked:

"Bardie, what will you do?"

In a hurried manner, Bardie answered:

"We must secure this man, or he will report what has occurred, and we will be detained."

The man exclaimed:

"I will not report the facts."

"You would do so at once."

"My own safety demands that I should not."

"I will hold you guiltless, but I must protect myself."

Bardie had come to the place prepared. He directed Gadding to raise the body of Fenier. Gadding obeyed and carried it to a ravine, where he laid it down. Meantime our hero seized hold of the second and bound him hand and foot, and also placed a gag in his mouth, but informed the prisoner that no real harm should come to him in the end. The man was taken and laid in a clump of bushes out of sight; indeed, he might have remained there until he died so far as there was any chance of his being discovered.

"We are in a scrape," said Gadding, "a serious scrape."

"You just leave matters to me. I know what I am about. You remain in this neighborhood until you hear from me, and I will soon have matters all arranged."

Bardie hastened to the city and went straight to the house of Mme. Nerac. He was as cool as though he had just returned from a morning walk for exercise. He was shown into Mme. Nerac's presence, and asked:

"Are you prepared to go away?"

"I am."

"It is necessary that you should go at once."

"What has happened?"

"I will explain at some future time. You must go at once."

"Go where?"

"To Omaha."

"And you?"

"I will join you there."

"When?"

"As soon as I can."

"Jean Fenier?"

"He is dead."

"Dead?"

"Yes."

Bardie explained just what he had intended should occur, and then related just what did occur. The woman listened with a wild look of terror in her eyes.

"I will not be permitted to go," she said.

"You are not implicated."

"But I will be."

"You need have no fear."

Bardie related his plans. It was arranged that the widow should leave in the train. Bardie was to remain behind to carry out certain plans he had in his own mind, and he was to reach Omaha as soon as possible. He told the lady just how she was to proceed, and gave her to understand that she need not fear pursuit or interference in any way.

"Your bitter enemy," he said, "is dead; the man was not known to have been connected in any way with you; and as far as I am concerned, I can look out for myself."

"Suppose you die or are killed?"

"Then you will have to get some one else to find the treasure caves; but I ask you to wait at least sixty days to hear from me."

Mme. Nerac completed all her arrangements to take the train; indeed, Bardie attended to the carrying of her baggage to the depot and saw her depart.

It was about noon when he rejoined Gadding, and he then informed his comrade that he had completed all his arrangements for what they call in Ireland a "fil."

It was midnight when two horsemen, well mounted, reached the place where the duel had been fought. They dismounted and took the prisoner who had acted as Fenier's second with them. They carried the man, after giving him refreshment, to the public road, and left him bound and gagged, but in a place where most certainly in the early morning he would be discovered, and then they galloped away. They rode all night, and in the morning secured fresh

Some good refreshment, and started on again and rode until night.

It was fortunate that Bardie had secured a map of the country. That night they bivouacked and had a good sleep, and in the morning resumed their ride. It took them eleven days to reach the frontier, when they crossed into Texas, where they sold their horses, discarded the Mexican dress that they had worn, and traveled to a railroad town, where they boarded the train, and within twenty days from the time of the party near the city of Mexico they arrived in Omaha.

Gadding began to feel uneasy, but Bardie bid him have no fear. "All the detectives are off our track now, and in a few weeks we will be millionaires." Our hero had become fully impressed with the certainty that he was sure to discover the treasure cave and secure the treasure.

Upon their arrival in Omaha they went to a boarding-house, and as it was night, our hero determined to postpone his search for the madame until the following day.

Bright and early upon the succeeding day Bardie started out to find his strangely secured fortune.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

It is but fair to inform our readers that Bardie was somewhat of an enthusiast. He had always indulged a dream since his first arrival in America of securing an immense fortune, when he proposed to return to Ireland and fight the usurpers who were fattening on his ancestral estates, and when he met Mme. Nerac and listened to her remarkable narrative, he felt that the dream of his life was to be realized.

His prospects made him very happy and jubilant, and as he walked out through the great western city of Omaha it was a buoyant heart that throbbed in his bosom.

He had received no word from Mme. Nerac, and really was not fully assured that she had arrived in Omaha, but on his way to the hotel where he hoped to find her, he was compelled to pass the depot, and mere curiosity caused him to glance in, when his eye fell upon a veiled lady.

Bardie had worked a complete metamorphosis in his appearance, and one who had seen him in Mexico would not recognize him in Omaha; but at a glance he recognized the form of Mme. Nerac despite the fact that her face was hidden under a veil. A train came in; the woman eagerly scanned the passengers as they alighted, and then with a sigh she turned away, and at the same instant our hero approached her, and in Spanish he said:

"How do you find yourself, madame?"
The lady gave a start, and after a moment said, speaking in English:

"You have made a mistake."
Our hero still spoke in Spanish, and said:
"I think not."
"I never saw you before, sir."
"I met the madame in Mexico."
"Never!"

"Yes; and the madame is looking for an arrival from the city of Mexico."

Woman-like, the madame asked:
"How do you know?"
"I bring a message to you."
"From whom?"
"The gentleman who was to meet you."
"Who are you?"
"His friend."

"How shall I know that you are his friend?"
Our hero laughed, and speaking in English, said:

"You do not recognize me?"
The moment our hero spoke English the madame recognized his voice, and exclaimed:

"I am so glad you have come!"
"Did you fear I would deceive you?"
"No; but I did fear you would fail to get away from that terrible city."

"I am here."
"I am so glad!"
"Where are you stopping?"

"I have carried out your instructions, and I have made arrangements for a long stay here."
"You have done well. You still have perfect faith in me?"

"I have."
"And you have taken good care of the papers?"

"I have."
Our hero, in a spirit of fairness, had returned the papers to Mme. Nerac, so that in case any

thing happened to him she would not lose her chance of recovering the treasure.

Bardie accompanied Mme. Nerac to her residence. She had secured furnished rooms, and had settled down to regular housekeeping with her maid. Upon reaching the house the two sat down and talked over their prospects. The madame said:

"You still have faith in the truth of the statements contained in the record?"

"I have."

"And you believe you can find the cave?"

"I do."

"When do you start?"

"As soon as I can find a guide."

Bardie remained a long time talking with the widow, and then departed. He intended to wander around and take observations. Our hero was a very keen and observing man. He took in his surroundings at a glance, as he had a wonderful knowledge of human nature. He was proceeding along the street when suddenly he saw a man thrust from a drinking place. The man was of dark complexion, and looked like an Indian, though dressed in the conventional apparel of the white man; but his clothing was poor indeed. As our hero glanced at the man, a sort of intuition came to him, and he approached the fellow and in a kindly voice, said:

"What is the matter, my friend?"
"Nothing," came the answer.
"You had some trouble in that place?"

The Indian flashed a look upon our hero, his dark eyes gleamed with intelligence, and in rather broken English he said:

"What does it concern you?"
"It may concern me and concern you."
"Ah, what do you mean?"

"Are you hungry?"
"No, I am dry."
"Dry?"

"Yes."
"What do you want?"
"A drink."

"Why do you not get one?"
"I want whisky."
"Why do you not get whisky?"

"I have no money."
"I will treat."
"You will treat?"

"Yes."
"Thank you, I will drink with you."
"Come."

Our hero moved toward the saloon, and the Indian said:

"No, not there."
"Why not?"
"He will not give me a drink."

"He will if you go in with me."
"No."
"Yes, he will."

"No."
"We will try. Come."
"He will throw us out."
"I reckon not. Come along."

The man hesitatingly followed our hero, and they entered the saloon; it was a low place, at best, and as they walked to the bar the bartender—a German—exclaimed:

"Here, get out there, half-breed. You can't come in here!"
"He comes in with me," said Bardie.

"I don't care who he comes in with, he can't come here."

Bardie beckoned to the half-breed to advance to the bar, when the bar-tender ran out from behind the counter and made a rush toward the half-breed. The latter would have run away, but Bardie seized the German and tightened his grip on the fellow's arm so that the man squirmed under the pressure, and he weakened. There was something in that grip that warned him, and also there was a gleam in our hero's eyes that emphasized the warning.

"You just go behind the bar, old fellow, and attend to us, or you'll get hurt."

Bardie spoke in tones that indicated that he meant business.
"Who pays for the drinks?"

"I do."
"That rascal has 'hung me up' enough already."

The man pointed toward the Indian, when our hero said:
"I pay this time."

CHAPTER LXXV.

The half-breed took his drink and hurried into the street, and our hero remained to exchange a few words with the bar-tender.

"Is he an Indian?" asked Bardie.
"No, he is a half-breed, and an awful beat. He is a smart fellow if he would let rum alone. There isn't a better hunter in the country than that lazy rascal, and yet he hangs around Omaha to skin drinks. I've kicked him out of here a dozen times within the last week."

"What is his name?"
"He goes by the name of Mat Denison. He is an honest fellow, I will say that, and if he would let rum alone he would be all right; and they do say that he is a brave fellow in the mountains, but he's a big duffer around the city here."

As our hero left the saloon, he muttered:
"Well, I reckon I am in luck; as far as I can learn, that fellow is just the man I want. I believe he will just suit me for the expedition."

Bardie wandered around seeking the fellow Mat Denison, and finally he came upon him. The man was lounging around the railroad depot. Approaching him, our hero said:

"Halloo, Mat, why did you leave me?"
"Didn't suppose you wanted me any more after you had given me a drink."

"Yes I did. You are just the man I've been looking for."

"Looking for me?"

"Yes."

"What do you want of me?"

"I reckon I want you. We will have a talk."

"I don't know you."

"That's all right."

"Do you know me?"

"Yes."

"Where did you ever see me?"

"Oh, you would not remember if I were to tell you."

"What do you want?"

"Come and have something to eat with me, and I will tell you all about it."

"Don't want anything to eat; want whisky."

The half-breed had a habit of speaking in the sententious manner peculiar to the Indian.

"You shall have some whisky, but you must eat first."

"Give me whisky first."

"And then will you eat?"

"Yes."

"Come along."

Our hero led the way toward a saloon.

"Not there."

"Why?"

"He throw me out."

"Come along."

"You look out?"

"Yes."

"Don't like me here."

"They will like me."

"Better not go."

"Come along."

"All right."

Bardie led the way into the saloon, but the moment they entered the door the bar-tender, a regular rough, exclaimed:

"Get out of here!"

Mat would have started away, but Bardie caught hold of him and held him, and addressing the bar-tender said:

"This man is with me."

"I don't care who he is with."

"I do."

"You are no better than he is. You 'git' out of here with him!"

Bardie stepped toward the bar, and the bar-tender made a rush from behind the counter, and running toward Bardie made a lunge at him, when quick as a flash our hero dealt him a blow that knocked him clean off his feet; indeed, he was knocked so hard that as he fell his feet reared up in the air. He almost made a double turn. The man regained his feet, ran behind the bar, and seized a pistol, but Bardie was at the bar, and he presented a cocked revolver at the fellow's head, and said:

"Hold on, my cocky, or you go down."

The man was subdued at once. He found that he had struck a Tartar, and it is a country, just in that quarter, where Tartars in homespun abound. The man laid his weapon back and said:

"Why, halloo! I did not recognize you. I took you for a duffer that was in here the other day."

"I thought you did."

The bar-tender extended his hand. Bardie took it, and as the fellow was not a heavy man, our hero actually jerked him clean across the counter.

The man was mad but did not dare to show

his anger. He took the whole thing as a joke, and when Bardie said:

"Now get around there and give us a drink," "got" in short order.

The half-breed had been a silent witness of the whole extraordinary proceeding, and when Bardie called him up to drink, he stepped forward boldly.

The two men took their liquor and started to leave the place, when the bar-tender called:

"Come in again!" "I will when you want a little more active exercise."

Once in the street, Bardie said to Mat: "Now we will go and get something to eat."

"You are a 'terror,'" said Mat.

"Am I?"

"Yes. That fellow in there frightens everybody in Denver."

"Does he?"

"Yes."

"Well, he got a good scare himself this morning."

"He did."

"We will go and get a good meal. Where shall we go?"

"To the railroad saloon."

"All right."

The Indian had said he was not hungry, but he eat like a ravenous wolf when once the fare was set before him, and after the meal Bardie said:

"Mat, you are pretty well acquainted in this country?"

"I am."

"I want to go back in the mountains."

"All right."

"Will you go as my guide?"

"No, I'll get you a man."

"Why won't you go?"

"Don't want to go."

"You must go."

"Why?"

"I want you."

"How long will you be gone?"

"I don't know."

"In what direction do you want to go?"

Bardie, during the long railroad ride, had studied up the map pretty well, and had gained an idea as to just where he was to look for the bearings, and he named the section.

"What! you want to go there?"

"Yes."

"You will never come back."

"Never come back?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Nothing there but wild Injins and grizzlies."

"Have you ever been in that section?"

"Yes, once, with a surveying party, and we were glad to get back."

"Then you know the trails?"

"Yes."

"You are just the man I want."

"Can't go."

"I will pay you well."

"How much?"

"A hundred dollars a month, and give you a good outfit."

"You will take whisky along?"

"Yes."

"I will go," came the answer.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

HAVING secured the half-breed's consent to accompany him, Bardie set to asking the man questions, and was amazed at the fellow's wonderful intelligence. He concerned the particular service for which he had been engaged.

Bardie ascertained from Mat all that would be necessary for the trip, and giving the fellow money as a sort of retainer, agreed to meet him at the depot that same evening.

Upon returning to his boarding-house, our hero found Gadding laboring under great excitement.

"I have been recognized!" he said.

"You have been recognized?"

"Yes."

"By whom?"

"I was going through the streets, and I saw a man looking at me."

"Who was the man?"

"One of the keepers of a jail in which I served."

"You are sure he is the right man?"

"I am."

"And he recognized you?"

"I'm sure he did."

"It is queer how a man fails to escape being

recognized when once there is a purpose in recognizing him."

"Yes, I am a goner."

"You are, eh?"

"Sure."

"Well, now, old man, you just leave this affair to me, and in twenty-four hours we will be where we can laugh at detectives, keepers, or any one else who is not stronger and braver than we are."

"What are your plans?"

"We leave here to-night."

"We do?"

"Yes."

"I may be captured before to-night."

"Did the man dog you?"

"I think not."

"Well, you just lay low here, and when night comes we will be all right."

Even while our hero was speaking there came a rap at the door. Bardie and Gadding had taken up their quarters in a small hotel.

"Who's there?" called Bardie.

"There is a man down-stairs who wants to see you."

"By George!" cried Gadding, "he is here."

"Is he?"

"Yes."

"Well, you just take things easy, and I will go down and see the man, and all he makes out of me he can put in his left eye."

Our hero descended the stairs and was shown into the bar-room, and a man was pointed out to him. Bardie approached and asked:

"Do you wish to see me?"

"No, sir."

"You sent up to my room, did you not?"

"I sent up for a gentleman; but you are not the man."

"Let me see; I think I know you, anyhow."

"You know me?"

"Yes."

"I don't remember ever having seen you before."

"Your name is Hewson?"

"That is my name."

"You used to be a keeper in a prison?"

Bardie spoke in a low tone, but he saw he had struck it right, as the man gave a start.

"Who are you?" asked the man.

"You ought to know me."

"I don't recall you; but come, let us sit down here."

The two men retired to one side, and the ex-keeper said:

"Were you ever in prison?"

"You were."

"Yes, I was a keeper."

"And do you not remember Gadding?"

"You are not Gadding."

"And you do not recognize me?"

"Oh, you can't play that on me."

"You know Gadding?"

"I do."

"And you think I am not Gadding?"

"I know you're not."

"Well?"

"It's well to you."

"What do you want?"

"You are a friend of Gadding's?"

"Yes, I am."

Bardie, as our readers have been informed, was a man of wonderfully quick apprehension, and he discerned that his comrade had nothing to fear from the ex-keeper, at least, so he thought, and he said:

"Yes, I am a friend of Tom Gadding."

"He is in town."

"Is he?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"I saw him to-day."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"I thought you wanted to speak to him?"

"I do."

"Why didn't you speak to him when you saw him?"

"I was not sure of my man."

"You have business with him?"

"Yes."

"You can talk your business to me."

"You are his friend?"

"I am."

"I'd like to see him."

"You can't."

"I can't?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"He has left town."

"He has left town?"

"Yes."

"He must have gone rather suddenly."

"He did."

"Why?"

"Because he recognized you?"

"Ah, I see. He was afraid of me?"

"Well, to speak plainly, there were reasons why he was not anxious to renew his acquaintance with you."

"He is an escaped convict."

"So you say."

"He feared I might want to return him to jail?"

"That would be a natural conclusion under all the circumstances."

"He is mistaken."

"Is he?"

"Yes; I am really his friend, and I have good news for him."

"Were you looking for him?"

"No. Meeting with him was accidental."

"And you have good news for him?"

"Yes."

"Relate the news to me."

"I'd rather see him."

"But I tell you he 'skipped.'"

"He was foolish."

"Not as he understood it."

"That is so. Well, I suppose I might as well let you into the thing."

"Certainly."

"You will see him again?"

"I will."

"When?"

"Soon."

The ex-keeper thought a moment, and then said:

"He has been exonerated as concerns that express robbery."

"He has?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"One of the men engaged in it died."

"Well?"

"Before his death he made a clean breast of the whole affair, and furnished certain information to the detective who was on the case. The detective followed up the clews and interviewed several others of the gang who were in jail for long terms, and between you and me, the detective admitted that ever since Gadding's conviction he had doubted his guilt."

"What you tell me is true?"

"Yes."

"And does the company know the facts?"

"They have obtained a pardon from the governor, and they are anxious to make amends to Gadding. I tell you it will all come out right in the end."

CHAPTER LXXVII.

BARDIE was delighted. He believed the ex-keeper's statement, but he said:

"What you tell me is true?"

"It is."

"Have you any proof?"

"I have."

"Let's see your proofs."

The man produced a newspaper in which there was an account confirming all that he had said.

"Gadding is not far away," said Bardie; and as he spoke he watched the expression of the ex-keeper's face.

"I know that he is upstairs."

"Well, he is."

"He need not fear me. I always liked Gadding."

"I've just one word to say to you. I shall bring Gadding down to see you."

"Well?"

"If you have been up to any trick, it will be bad for you personally."

"You threaten me?"

"I do."

"All right. I've let you on to the truth, that's all."

"You must have."

"You will give nothing away?"

"Certainly not."

Bardie ascended to his room. He found Gadding in a very uneasy state.

"Did you see him?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"I tried to play myself off as Gadding, but he would not have it."

"He really saw me then?"

"Yes."

"And recognized me?"

"Yes."

"I'm a goner."

"You are going down to see him."
 "You surrender me?"
 "I do."
 "I won't blame you. I have been a constant trouble and expense to you."
 "It is better for you to meet this man. Suppose I send him up here?"
 "As you choose, and remember I do not feel toward you. I can see it must be a great burden to have a man like me hanging about you."
 "Tom," said our hero, "when I desert you may my right hand wither. No, sir, I will never desert you. I'll fight for you to the last drop of blood in my veins. You need have no fear, that man has good news for you."
 "Good news for me?"
 "Yes."
 "What do you mean?"
 "Just what I say."
 "What good news can he have for me?"
 "He will tell you."
 "Bardie, old man, it's all right; but he has fooled you and worked you. Yes, there is a large reward for my capture, and he has 'played' you; but it's all right."
 "I am not an easy man to 'play,' and if he has 'played' me he will never get the reward, that's all; and it will not end in any mishap to you, but I know it's all right. See here."
 Bardie handed to Gadding the newspaper that contained an account of his exoneration. When Gadding had read it he burst into tears.
 "Can it be true, Bardie?"
 "It is true; and that man down-stairs can give you all the particulars. He is really your friend."
 "Bardie, I am glad on your account, as much as on my own, because this confirms my story to you."
 "I never doubted your story, Tom."
 "This seems too good to be true, Bardie."
 "It is true. I am satisfied."
 "If it is, I will be able to clear myself of all the charges against me."
 "Yes; and you can assume another name, and you will be a rich man."
 "You really believe yet that we are to succeed?"
 "I am very hopeful, Tom."
 "There is one thing: I am not recognized in the crimes wherein I am really guilty, and I have made restitution in every case but one."
 "You can make restitution there in good time."
 "Bardie, if I am assured of being let alone, I can earn an honest fortune. I long to be an honest and respected man."
 "You shall be, old boy. But will you see this keeper?"
 "Yes, I will."
 The ex-keeper was shown into Tom's presence, and confirmed all that had been said to our hero.
 Gadding was really a happy man.
 At the appointed hour our hero started to meet Mat Denison the guide so as to complete his arrangements for their departure, but the guide did not show up.
 "By George!" muttered Bardie, "I believe I have lost him, after all."
 He waited a long time, but Mat did not put in an appearance. Bardie proceeded to call upon the widow, and to her he imparted his plans. It was arranged that she should remain in Omaha until she received word from our hero, and finally she said:
 "Is it possible that we shall succeed?"
 "I am rather tired of answering that question," said Bardie; "but I will do so once more, and now mark well my words, if those caves are in existence, I shall find them; if there is any gold in them, I shall receive it, and if I do you shall have your fair and equitable share."
 "I do not doubt your honor, it is your success I doubt."
 "I will succeed if there is anything in which to succeed, and don't you forget it; and really, I have the most perfect confidence in the whole scheme, and shall not be convinced to the contrary until I have proved that there are no such caves or that there is no such treasure at all."
 "And when do you expect to start?"
 "I had expected to start this night, but my guide that I had secured appears to have gone back on me."
 "I can tell you of a guide."
 "You can?"
 "Yes."
 "I know a woman who has done some work for me, and one day an Indian passed

here, and the woman told me he was the most wonderful guide in the West, only that he drank. I can find out about him from her."
 "Oh, it's all right. I can secure the man I want. And as it may be that I shall start to-night, I will bid you good-bye as a precaution."
 Our hero gave the widow a great deal of advice as to how she was to act under certain emergencies, and finally left her. He was walking along when he saw a man staggering along ahead of him, and at a second glance he recognized his whilom guide.
 "By George! there's the rascal now!" cried Bardie, and he ran forward and clapped the half-breed on the back, and it was no easy rap he gave him. The fellow made a movement as though to draw a weapon from his belt, but on the instant recognized our hero, and exclaimed:
 "Here I am!"
 "Yes, but it is not here I was to meet you."
 "Well, you see I had to have just one good spree. It's all right. I will be a good man after this."
 "You think you will be."
 "Yes, and I will take you to the caves, or die in the attempt."
 Bardie was thunder-struck when he heard Mat allude to the caves.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

It was indeed a remarkable admission to fall from the lips of the half-breed, as our hero had not mentioned one word to him concerning the treasure caves. Seeing the man was drunk and talkative, Bardie determined to draw him on and find out just what he meant and just how much he knew about the caves.

"How can you take me anywhere?" demanded our hero.

"Ah, I can guide you. I know the country better than any man living. My grandfather was chief of the tribe that lived and roamed all over the section where the caves are situated."

"What caves?"

"The gold caves," came the startling answer. And the answer was the more startling as it really dashed all our hero's wild dreams to atoms.

Bardie was a sensible fellow and a quick thinker, and the fact that the caves were known and talked about almost induced him to set the whole story down as a myth, some Captain Kidd treasure business.

"You're a miserable fellow," said Bardie.

"I know that."

"Well, you are."

"Yes, I know I am for getting drunk."

"Exactly."

"I'm all right now."

"No, you're all wrong. You are of no benefit to me."

"That's where you don't know me."

"A drunken guide is of no use to any one."

"I will not be drunk when we start; you don't know me."

"I am finding you out very fast."

"Yes, but you have only found me out a little. See here, I've been starving for whisky, and now I'm going to have all I want, and then I'll be all right, and I will not want any more until we come back from the trip to the caves."

"Come along with me."

"All right; but I am going to have all the whisky I want. I will take it all to-night, and to-morrow I am done."

"Do you consider yourself a man?"

"No, I am only a half-breed. Don't you know that?"

"And do you not know shame?"

"No, I don't know any shame. I know when I want whisky."

Our hero saw that it was useless to preach to Mat in his then condition, and he said:

"I am sorry for you, old fellow, but I do not think I shall need your services. I will be all right."

"When?"

"By to-morrow night."

"But when will you be all wrong again?"

"Not until I am discharged from your service."

"I wish I could believe you."

"You can believe me. I'll be all right."

"Well, come along."

Our hero took the fellow to an eating house and ordered some supper for him.

"I'm afraid to eat," said Mat.

"You are afraid to eat?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I want to end my thirst before I eat."

"You will go mad if you go on drinking."

"Oh, no, I won't."

Bardie ordered some drink for the poor wretch. Any man is a wretch who drinks, or becomes one in the end.

After they had been sitting a little while, Bardie again remarked:

"I fear I will have no use for you."

"Yes, you will."

"I know how it is with you fellows."

"How is it?"

"You think you swear off, but you never keep your promise to yourselves."

"I do."

"You do?"

"Yes."

"I have no guarantee that you do."

"See here, captain, I tell you I will be all right, and I will guide you to the caves."

"You will guide me to the caves?"

"Yes."

"What caves?"

"The gold caves."

"How do you know I want to go to any caves?"

"I know you do."

"I never said I did."

"I know you did not."

"Then what makes you think I want to go to the caves?"

"You made all your inquiries about the locality where the caves are situated."

"Then you have been to the caves?"

"Never."

"What do you know about them?"

"I've been near them."

"Near them?"

"Yes."

"What doing?"

"Surveying."

"Were you looking for them?"

"No. I did not know about them when I was there."

"How did you learn about them since?"

"An old Indian told me about them."

"What did he tell you?"

"About the caves."

"But what did he tell you?"

"He told me there was gold there."

"Why didn't he get the gold?"

"He did get some."

"Why did he not get it all?"

"He couldn't find the rest."

"Why didn't you go and get the treasure?"

"Well, I had an idea of going, but no one would fit out an expedition; they thought I was lying."

"Then you tried to fit out an expedition?"

"I did."

"You are all off as to my purpose, old man."

"I am?"

"Yes."

"Ain't you going to the caves?"

"I am going on an exploration trip; but since you have mentioned about treasure caves, if I come within the neighborhood of them I will go and search them of course."

"There is treasure there. Yes, sir, smelted gold."

"How do you know?"

"The Indian showed me an ingot."

"Where is the Indian?"

"He is dead. He and I were going to start an expedition, but he got drunk on the proceeds of his ingot, and was killed in a quarrel."

"How long ago did this occur?"

"About two years ago."

"And you have spoken to people about these caves?"

"To one or two."

"You wanted them to organize an expedition?"

"Yes."

"And they wouldn't do it?"

"No."

"If I could depend upon you, I would take you with me."

"You will take me with you."

"I do not think I can."

"Then you will never find the caves."

"I am not looking for the caves. I am on a scientific expedition."

"But I've told you about the caves."

"Yes."

"It might suit you just to explore them."

"That is so."

"And I can guide you to them. Yes, sir, and I can show you other wonders that will make your hair stand on end. You must take me with you and no one else."

"Why no one else?"
 "Because we will find the treasure ourselves."
 "But I am not going for treasure."
 "I am; and I'm going with you," came the answer.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

OUR hero was really delighted with the strange declarations of the half-breed, but he did not let the man discover his delight, but played on with the scientific scheme.

Two days subsequent to the events we have related, our hero, Tom Gadding, and the guide, Mat Denison, made their start, fully equipped for their journey. One thing was in their favor. The start was made in the most favorable season of the year for the trip, but one month following the day of starting a sad event occurred.

Mat Denison had proved a faithful guide. He had remained sober, and had proved himself a brave and honest fellow.

On the day in question, the party were in the remote fastnesses of the mountains, far beyond where the enterprising prospector had yet penetrated, and they were crossing a crevice, when poor Mat made a false step and plunged down a thousand feet. He disappeared like a stone thrown into a dark pool of water; there came one scream as he fell, and all was over. He was dashed to death.

Our hero and Tom Gadding had passed over, and were attracted by the wild scream of terror, and turned only in time to see their companion disappear. A moment they stood speechless, then after an interval Tom Gadding broke the silence with the remark, made in a husky voice:

"He's gone."
 "Yes," affirmed Bardie, "the poor fellow has gone, indeed."

"How did it happen?" demanded Gadding.
 "His attention must have been distracted for a moment, and at that fatal moment his foot must have slipped."

"What will we do now?"
 "We are all right."
 "How will we ever find our way back to civilization?"

"You need have no fear, as I have made a record of all the bearings by land and sky, and I can start to-morrow, if necessary, and go back over the same track by which we came."

There came a moment's pause, and Gadding said:

"Would it not be wise for us to make a start?"

"To return?"
 "Yes."

"Not this evening, Tom, some other evening, thank you."

"And will you go on without a guide?"

"That is just what I will do."

"We will lose our way."

"Do you think so?"

"It can not be otherwise."

"Well, old man, you wouldn't attempt to start back alone?"

"No, sir."

"You will go with me?"

"Yes."

"Then it will be some time before we start to return."

"Is it possible that you still hope to find those caves?"

"Yes, sir, I am satisfied I will find them. In the first place, I am fully convinced that they are in existence, and in the second place I am assured that we are in the vicinity of them. You will remember poor Mat never wavered a moment in his declarations as to their existence. The man was speaking of something he had seen, not what he had heard about."

"And yet he could not find them."

"He has certainly brought us pretty near to them."

"You're a man of wonderful faith."

"I am, and I tell you now I have not traveled all these weary miles for the purpose of turning back defeated."

"Poor Mat!" sighed Tom.

"Yes, poor Mat, and, by George, we must go down to the bottom of this ravine and see what has become of the poor fellow."

"You will not find a piece of him as big as your hand," said Tom Gadding, with a shudder.

"I would like to find even a piece as big as that. He was a noble fellow after all."

"But you can never descend to the bottom of the ravine."

"Mat did, I reckon."

"And I believe that is the only way you can get down there."

"I do not propose to try that way."

"Do you know we are out of provisions?"

"Not quite."

"We will be in a day or two. Our mules are dead, and here we are in these wild fastnesses with nothing but our guns and ammunition, and nothing to shoot for a meal."

"My dear boy, I have a proposition to make you. Remain right here, and I will descend to the bottom of the ravine."

"Where you go I go also."

"I can't afford to lose you, Tom, and the death of Mat is a great shock."

"I can not afford to lose you either. I shall go with you."

"All right, we will start."

Bardie had studied Mat Denison's methods, and had become quite a woodsman, and it was in a regular trapper-like fashion that he started to find a trail down the tremendous cliff. It was about noon when he started, and the sun had gone down behind the lofty peaks when he came to a trail. It was a well-defined one, however, and it was with a cry of delight that he called out to Gadding, who had sat down to rest:

"I've got it."
 "What?"
 "A trail."

Tom joined our hero, and said:

"You will not attempt the descent to-night?"

"No."

"What will you do?"

"We will camp here. You make a fire, and I will stroll over and see what that rush of water means."

"There is a stream near us?"

"Yes, and do you not see we are on a plateau. Why, boy, I may find some game and we may have a good meal yet."

"You will not go far, old man?"

"Just beyond the sound of a pistol shot."

Tom Gadding set to work to gather brushwood for a fire, and succeeded in gathering quite a heap, and he had a bright fire burning and crackling as the shadows of evening settled around.

Meantime Bardie, guided by the sound of running water, wandered on, and at length came to a place where a beautiful water-fall dashed down the side of a rock, and at the bottom was a bright, clear pool of water.

"By ginger!" cried our hero, "this is just high!" He approached the pool, and there remained sufficient light for him to see fish darting through the clear waters.

"Trout, as I live!" he exclaimed.

Bardie approached the edge of the pool, watched his chance, and discharged simultaneously both barrels of a magnificent shotgun that he carried, and as the smoke cleared away three magnificent trout rose to the surface, and turned upon their sides.

Bardie managed to draw them to the edge of the pool with a cleft stick, and when he lifted the beauties out he laid them down and just danced for joy, exclaiming:

"Here's a meal for the gods!"

CHAPTER LXXX.

PROBABLY there can be no greater delight under any circumstance than that which filled the heart of our hero as he contemplated his three beautiful prizes, and when he strung them on a stick and started to rejoin Gadding he was a proud man indeed.

"So, old fellow," he exclaimed, as he came in sight of his companion, as the latter stood in the ruddy glow of the crackling fire, "you thought we'd starve to death, eh? Well, here's a dish that kings might envy."

"Well, I'll be hanged!" ejaculated Gadding.

"Where did you get 'em?"

"I got them from yonder pool. Hear the waters sing, old man."

It took the man but a moment to knock off the blazing twigs, and, after the old hunter's method, arrange their fish for a delicious broil, and when they sat down to eat they were about as happy as men could be.

"By George," cried Gadding, "this puts new life into me, I'll admit."

"Why, old man, it's just glorious, eh? and what a jewel is salt," cried Bardie, as he sprinkled a bit of the juicy fish with the useful edible.

The men eat to their hearts' content, and drank of the pure, cool water that Bardie had filled his canteen with; then came forth their

pipes, and wrapped in their blankets, they sat before the fire. The excitement over, and thoughts fell upon them, and it was Bardie who said:

"That was terrible—the death of Mat."

"Yes," said Gadding, "a chill still comes over my nerves at the remembrance. Poor fellow! how sudden it was, indeed."

"I tell you, Gadding, it's true that 'In the midst of life we are in death' after all. Why, ten minutes before his fall, Mat was talking to me about the caves, and what he was going to do when he got his share of the treasure."

"He seemed to have absolute confidence in the existence of the treasure."

"He did."

"I still believe it all to be a wild dream."

"You do?"

"I do."

"See here, old man, does not the coincidence strike you as rather strange and remarkable. Here are the manuscripts, and we get them from a party who comes from France, while we are in Mexico, then we come to the territories of the United States, and we find a half-breed Indian who knows all about them, who has such a well-defined idea that he is the first to speak of them to me, and he acts as our guide without any instructions, eh?"

"Did you not instruct him?"

"I did not."

"And he led us here of his own volition?"

"Yes."

"That is strange."

"It is strange when you consider that this place agrees with the manuscripts as far as they indicate."

"Is that so?"

"It is true. If I had come without a guide, and had studied out my route from the papers and charts, I should have come right here."

"It is indeed very strange."

"I tell you, old man, we are going to find the caves, but whether or not we find the treasure is another thing, but it is my opinion that we will."

Thus talking and speculating, the two men passed the night until sleep fell upon them, and covered in their robes and blankets, they soon fell into a good slumber.

Bright and early upon the following morning they awoke, started up their fire, exchanged greetings, and Bardie started for some more fish. In due time he returned with three beauties, and the two men had a good fish breakfast. The meal sustained their courage, and even Gadding for the first time in a week expressed a feeling of hopefulness.

After the breakfast they started down the trail. It was a dangerous undertaking, but the two men had become accustomed to mountain climbing, and in good time succeeded in reaching the bed of the ravine, and found a swiftly rushing torrent.

"That settles it, Bardie."

"Settles what?"

"We will never find the piece of Mat as big as your hand if he ever reached bottom here. He has been whisked far beyond our reach. I thought it foolish to come down here."

"You did, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, old man," said Bardie, with a strange gleam in his eyes, "Mat was faithful unto death."

"What do you mean?" asked Gadding, in a low voice.

"He has guided us by his dash to death right to the very spot, and I doubt if he would ever have found it in life."

"What do you mean?"

Bardie drew forth his charts, and made a long study, and after due time said:

"We are near to the caves."

"Are you joking?"

"We are sure to find them now. Yes, sir, it is a straight path."

"How do you know?"

"See that rock?"

Bardie pointed to a most singular rock formation.

"Yes, I see it."

"You notice its peculiar form?"

"I do."

"Listen, and I will read. That is one of our actual bearings."

Bardie read from his manuscript, and as he did so Gadding followed each detail of the description, and when our hero had concluded, he asked:

"Did you really read from the manuscript?"

"I did."

"The thing was greatly excited, and he said:
"You described the formation in every de-

"I knew I did, and I've been looking for
"Yes, old man, I've dreamed about
"Every time I laid my head on my blanket this
"last month."

"Can it be possible, Bardie, that we are really
"to find the caves?"

"We are to find the caves as sure as my name
"is Bardie O'Connor."

"This is wonderful."

"It is indeed wonderful, and it is true, old
"man."

"We can't find the body of Mat."

"We will clamber down along the edge of
"the stream. It is just possible that his body
"may have been found in some obstruction."

"One question, old man; are you really sin-
"cere now?"

"What do you mean?"

"Are you really going to search for the
"body?"

"Yes; what did you expect?"

"Does not the same route lead us toward
"the caves?"

"That may be so, old man, but I would go
"three days' travel if I was assured we could
"find the poor fellow's body."

"The two men clambered along by the verge
"of the stream for about a mile, and at length
"came to a place where their further progress
"was barred."

"We can go no further, Bardie."

"It appears so."

"And now what will you do?"

"Eat; and to-night, old man, we will sleep in
"the treasure caves."

CHAPTER LXXXI.

"THE men finished their meal, and took a long
"rest, and at the same time Bardie studied his
"chart."

"We have but one more 'bearing' to find,"
"he said."

"After a good rest the tramp was resumed,
"and soon Bardie came to a point when he ex-
"claimed:

"Eureka!"

"Both men stared, silent and aghast, until
"Gadding asked:

"Have you found it?"

"Look here."

"Our hero pointed to a little cleft in the rock,
"and then to a drawing on his chart. The latter
"was an exact copy of the real cleft."

"Do you see?"

"I see."

"We're here."

"What is it?"

"The entrance to the treasure cave."

"By George!" ejaculated Tom Gadding.

"It is so, by George, and by Tom, old man.
"We are here."

"It is impossible to describe the expressions
"that rested upon the faces of the two men as
"their agitation was extreme."

"Tom," said Bardie, "here we are."

"So you said."

"I tell you we are here."

"Yes."

"We have found the caves."

"Yes."

"And now comes the question of the treas-
"ure."

"You're right."

"Bardie started to enter the cleft in the rock,
"and in a moment he disappeared from Tom's
"sight. The latter held back, and a few mo-
"ments passed ere Bardie's head reappeared."

"Come on, old man."

"Have you found it."

"The cave?—yes."

"The treasure?"

"No."

"Tom followed Bardie through the opening,
"and was led along a narrow passage until at
"length he appeared in a great cavern. Bardie
"had a light, which was only sufficient to make
"distant vistas, but the men found a lot of
"old wood, and soon built a fire, and a bright
"fire was kindled around."

"I see how it is," said Bardie. "When the
"harvest came in the spring these caves are
"filled."

"I'm with water, and not with treasure,"
"Tom paid no heed to Tom's comment, but
"was on his way."

"That accounts for all this driftwood in here,
"and we are lucky, we have enough for fires
"for a week."

"Plenty of wood, but no gold."

"We shall see."

"I do see."

"What do you see?"

"The caves are all right, but I am satisfied
"the treasure business is all imagination."

"We shall see."

"The two men made an exploration, but it ap-
"peared that there was but the one cave, and it
"was easily explored, yet there were no signs of
"treasure."

"A journey for nothing, Bardie," said Tom,
"some hours later, when the two men settled
"down for a night of sleep."

"It would seem so, old man."

"Yes, the cave is here, but there is no sign
"of treasure; there never has been any."

"You may be right."

"I am not blaming you, old man, not at all.
"We have made a good, bold dash for a fortune."

"Yes, we have."

"The two men later on appeared to fall asleep,
"but in fact it was only Tom Gadding who
"did go to sleep. Bardie could not sleep. He
"had not given up yet. It still ran through
"his head that there was treasure somewhere, but
"he proposed to do a little exploring on his own
"account after his companion was really asleep."

"In due time Bardie rose up and looked
"around. Tom was really asleep, indeed he was
"sleeping soundly, sleeping only as men can sleep
"under similar circumstances. Fully assured that
"his friend was nodding in the land of Nod, Bar-
"die arose, arranged a torch, and then taking a
"candle brought for the purpose, he set out on his
"search. He made a careful study as he pro-
"ceeded, and at length he uttered a cry of de-
"light. He found a crevice that had been choked
"with sand and dirt, showing that there had been
"a time when the waters had flowed through.
"He set to work and soon cleared away the soft
"debris, and in time succeeded in making an
"opening large enough to crawl through. He was
"just bold enough to follow his nose, and
"once through, he found himself in a second
"cavern, and he had walked but a few steps when
"his foot struck against something, and bringing
"his light to bear upon it, his glance rested upon
"a human skull. At first he was a little startled,
"but he soon recovered, for he was really a man
"of iron nerve. He walked along, and a moment
"later a sight met his gaze that caused him
"to stand aghast, and in low, husky tones he
"muttered:

"Great Scott!"

"It was a startling sight that met his gaze.
"His eyes rested upon several human skeletons,
"from which the flesh had wasted off, leaving the
"glittering bones almost perfect in their ghastli-
"ness."

"Well," he muttered, "I've found a grave-
"yard if I have not found a treasure cave."

"He stood a few moments gazing upon the
"weird surroundings, and then stepped forward,
"and as he did so his eyes met a second wonder-
"ful sight, and he stood speechless, with his eyes
"fairly bulging from their sockets."

"Piled against one side of the cave were ingots
"of gold. He rubbed his eyes. The sight was
"really dazzling, and he could not but feel for a
"moment that he was really dreaming. He
"stepped closer. He lifted one of the rudely
"molded ingots in his hand—it was gold! yes,
"pure gold! He had found the caves, and, what
"was more, he had found the treasure."

"He did not stop at the moment to theorize or
"seek to solve the wonderful mystery. He took
"one of the ingots, and returned to the first cav-
"ern. He extinguished his torch, and lay down
"to sleep as coolly and calmly as though he were
"again in his college bed in Germany. He slept
"well, but was the first to awake, and he sat with
"a glad smile upon his face waiting for his com-
"rade to awake."

"At length Tom did open his eyes, and seeing
"his companion was awake, he said:

"Halloo, old man; couldn't you sleep?"

"I slept like a top."

"How do you feel?"

"Rich."

"You feel rich?"

"Yes."

"You are bound to imagine you found the
"treasure."

"Yes, I've made up my mind to imagine I've
"found the treasure."

"And what are we to do?"

"Arrange to carry the treasure away."

"Tom thought he was fooling or that he had
"gone mad owing to his long dream of wealth."

"Are you dreaming, Bardie?"

"I don't know. I may be. You must
"decide."

"How can I decide?"

"By telling me what this is!" and Bardie ex-
"tended the ingot of pure gold."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

"TOM GADDING glared as though he were daz-
"zled by the head-light of an engine or had shot
"into his eyes the sharp glare of an electric re-
"flector. He just gazed with distended eyes and
"open mouth, while upon our hero's face there
"rested a quiet smile of delight and pleasure."

"What is it?" asked Gadding at length, in a
"gasping tone."

"What is it?"

"Yes."

"Can't you see what it is?"

"Is it gold?"

"It looks like gold, don't it?"

"Yes; but is it gold?"

"Feel of it."

"Gadding reached forth his hand, and took
"the ingot."

"It's heavy."

"Heavy enough for gold, is it not?"

"Yes. Great Scott, where did you get it?"

"Where did I get it?"

"Yes."

"Do you forget we are in the treasure
"caves?"

"You're fooling me."

"Does that ingot feel as though I were fool-
"ing you?"

"But where did you get it?"

"Why, old man, do you remember the story
"of Rezzero and the Inca?"

"I do."

"The Inca offered gold heaped as high as he
"could reach."

"Am I dreaming?"

"No."

"I am really awake?"

"I should say you weren't if you doubt the
"ingot."

"Bardie, what does it all mean?"

"It means that I have found the treasure."

"You have found the treasure?"

"Yes."

"Where is it?"

"You have a sample in your hand."

"But where did you find it?"

"Not far off."

"And is there more?"

"A heap that will cause you to faint. I tell
"you my dream is realized."

"And you have really found the treasure?"

"Yes."

"When did you find it?"

"Last night."

"Last night?"

"Yes."

"Why, you went to sleep before me."

"Did I?"

"Yes."

"You are sure?"

"I am sure."

"There is where I fooled you, old boy. I
"did not go to sleep. I had an idea the gold was
"around somewhere, and I meant to find it, and
"I did."

"Where is it?"

"We will eat our breakfast, and then I will
"show you a sight such as no man ever beheld."

"I am not hungry."

"But we must eat, all the same. We will be
"hungry some time, and it's not healthy to go
"without eating in the mountains."

"Their meal was prepared, and as soon as it
"was concluded, Gadding said:

"Lead me to the treasure."

"Why, man, you're wild."

"I am. Oh, Bardie, you do not know what
"wild dreams have grown in my mind during the
"last half hour, and if you are really fooling me
"I shall die."

"I am not fooling you, old man."

"And you have really found the treasure?"

"I tell you—yes."

"Oh, take me to see it."

"Come along."

"Bardie led his comrade into the treasure
"chamber. They went prepared with torches,
"and soon illuminated the treasure cavern pretty
"well, and Gadding's eyes rested upon the golden
"heap, and he stood transfixed for fully five
"minutes. He was speechless, but at length he
"murmured:

"Bardie, do I dream?"

"No, old man, not as concerns that golden
"pile."

"It is really gold?"
"It is."
"And it is ours?"
"Yes, it is ours."
The men began an examination of the skeletons, and then more closely surveyed the heap of treasure, and after an hour or so returned to the outer cavern.
"Bardie," said Gadding, "where did that gold come from?"
"Ah, we can not tell."
"Where was it smelted?"
"That also will remain a mystery."
"Who were the smelters?"
"Probably those are the remains of them we saw in the cave."
"And what is your theory?"
"I have a theory."
"And what is it?"
"The treasure gatherers made the cavern their treasury. Where they got the gold, as I said, we will never know, nor how they smelted it, but their fate can be easily traced. They were in the cave with their gold when the torrent burst suddenly upon them. They could not escape. They were all drowned, and their secret perished with them. That, in brief, is my theory, and I shall not seek to investigate any further. The gold is ours just as rightfully under all the circumstances as though we had mined it and smelted it ourselves. One thing is certain, it has lain here for over a century, and I believe the miners were Mexicans. Poor fellows! it's all the same to them now, for had they not been drowned time would have called them in long ere this."

"And what are we to do?"
"We can take our time in arranging our plans. No one will interfere with us; but I will go and see what I can capture for a meal."
Bardie had his rifle all right, and stepped outside the cavern, and had just reached the daylight when not more than twenty feet distant he encountered an object that made his blood run cold. He was confronted by a huge grizzly.
In a moment our hero recovered his usual nerve, and as he glared at the huge beast and remembered the proximity of the cave, he muttered, with a strain of humor in his voice:
"That is the landlord, and, by ginger, down he goes."
Bardie was an excellent shot, and he had met a grizzly before when in company with Mat Denison, and the half-breed had instructed him just where to aim and drop his game. Bardie fired, and the great beast rolled over into the torrent, and was carried away down the stream, kicking and roaring, but he had received a fatal wound, and Bardie remarked:
"He won't float far before he's done kicking and roaring forever."
Our hero secured some other game, and he and his partner made a good meal, and then with their pipes lighted, sat down to talk over the situation.
"Bardie," said Tom Gadding, "we're rich men."
"We are."
"But how are we going to transport our riches?"
"We can do it, but it will take a long time."

"The wealth is ours?"
"Yes."
"We must keep our secret?"
"Yes."
"You are now really a Monte-Cristo."
"I reckon we will both be richer men than Monte-Cristo."
"Madame Nerac can buy the estates of her whilom lover."
"Oh, she shall have her full share—her share to a third of the ingots."
They then set about securing the gold and packing it ready for transportation.
Having done so, they set out for Omaha to deliver to Mme. Nerac her fair share of the gold. She thankfully received it, and in a few days took passage for France. Arrived there, she soon found her early lover, Louis, and tendered him such of the gold as was necessary to liquidate the claims on his ancestral estate. This was very easily effected, and with the remainder of the treasure they readily solved the wish of their lives in a happy marriage.
Tom Gadding, having proved that he was innocent of the crime which had made him a fugitive from justice, settled himself in a lucrative business, and is now enjoying the rights of an honorable citizen.
As for our hero, after marrying Grace Parrish and visiting those who had so nobly befriended him in his trials, he set sail for the land of his birth, and soon proved his claim to the estates of which he had so long been deprived, in the enjoyment of which we now leave him, dispensing his riches with lavish hand, and causing many of the poor to bless the name of BONANZA BARDIE.

THE END.

Works by F. Du Boisgobey Contained in the Seaside Library, Pocket Edition:

NO.	PRICE.
83 Sealed Lips	20
104 The Coral Pin. First half	20
104 The Coral Pin. Second half	20
264 Piédouche, a French Detective	10
828 Babiole, the Pretty Milliner. First half	20
828 Babiole, the Pretty Milliner. Second half	20
453 The Lottery Ticket	20
475 The Prima Donna's Husband	20
522 Zig-Zag, the Clown; or, The Steel Gauntlets	20
523 The Consequences of a Duel	20
648 The Angel of the Bells	20
697 The Pretty Jailer. First half	20
697 The Pretty Jailer. Second half	20
699 The Sculptor's Daughter. First half	20
699 The Sculptor's Daughter. Second half	20
782 The Closed Door. First half	20

NO.	PRICE.
782 The Closed Door. Second half	20
851 The Cry of Blood. First half	20
851 The Cry of Blood. Second half	20
918 The Red Band. First half	20
918 The Red Band. Second half	20
942 Cash on Delivery	20
1076 The Mystery of an Omnibus	20
1080 Bertha's Secret. First half	20
1080 Bertha's Secret. Second half	20
1082 The Severed Hand. First half	20
1082 The Severed Hand. Second half	20
1085 The Matapan Affair. First half	20
1085 The Matapan Affair. Second half	20
1088 The Old Age of Monsieur Lecoq. First half	20
1088 The Old Age of Monsieur Lecoq. Second half	20

The above works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent by mail to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of the price. Address
P. O. Box 3751. GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE, 17 to 27 Vandewater Street, New York.

Works by Emile Gaboriau Contained in the Seaside Library, Pocket Edition:

NO.	PRICE.
7 File No. 118	20
12 Other People's Money	20
20 Within an Inch of His Life	20
26 Monsieur Lecoq. Vol. I.	20
26 Monsieur Lecoq. Vol. II.	20
38 The Clique of Gold	20
44 The Widow Lerouge	20
48 The Mystery of Orcival	20
144 Promises of Marriage	10

NO.	PRICE.
979 The Count's Secret; or, A Terrible Life. Part I.	20
979 The Count's Secret; or, A Terrible Life. Part II.	20
1002 Marriage at a Venture.	20
1015 A Thousand Francs Reward	20
1045 The 13th Hussars	20
1078 The Slaves of Paris. First half	20
1078 The Slaves of Paris. Second half	20
1083 The Little Old Man of the Batignolles	10

The above works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent by mail to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of the price. Address
P. O. Box 3751. GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE, 17 to 27 Vandewater Street, New York.

OLD SLEUTH LIBRARY.

A Series of the Most Thrilling Detective Stories Ever Published!

ISSUED QUARTERLY.

PRICE 5 CENTS EACH.

NO. 1.—OLD SLEUTH, THE DETECTIVE.

A dashing romance, detailing in graphic style the hair-breadth escapes and thrilling adventures of a veteran agent of the law.

NO. 2.—THE KING OF THE DETECTIVES.

In this story the shrewdness and cunning of a master-mind are delineated in a fascinating manner.

NO. 3.—OLD SLEUTH'S TRIUMPH.

The crowning triumph of the great detective's active career is reached after undergoing many exciting perils and dangers.

NO. 4.—UNDER A MILLION DISGUISES.

The many subterfuges by which a detective tracks his game to justice are all described in a graphic manner in this great story.

NO. 5.—NIGHT SCENES IN NEW YORK.

An absorbing story of life after dark in the great metropolis. All the various features of metropolitan life—the places of amusement, high and low life among the night-hawks of Gotham, etc., are realistically described in this delightful story.

NO. 6.—OLD ELECTRICITY, THE LIGHTNING DETECTIVE.

For ingenuity of plot, quick and exciting succession of dramatic incidents, this great story has not an equal in the whole range of detective literature.

NO. 7.—THE SHADOW DETECTIVE.

This thrilling story is a masterpiece of entrancing fiction. The wonderful exploits and hair-breadth escapes of a clever law-agent are all described in brilliant style.

NO. 8.—RED-LIGHT WILL, THE RIVER DETECTIVE.

In this splendid romance, lovers of the weird, exciting phases of life on the teeming docks and wharfs of a great city will find a mine of thrilling interest.

NO. 9.—IRON BURGESS, THE GOVERNMENT DETECTIVE.

The many sensational incidents of a detective's life in chasing to cover the sharks who prey upon the revenue of the Government are all described in a fascinating manner. This story will hold the reader spell-bound with interest from beginning to end.

NO. 10.—THE BRIGANDS OF NEW YORK.

This work is a startling exposé of the dangers of the great metropolis, and brings to light many hitherto hidden crimes perpetrated by the criminals of the city.

NO. 11.—TRACKED BY A VENTRILOQUIST.

In this story the wonderful art of ventriloquism is made to play a prominent part, and by its aid many a miscarriage of justice is avoided.

NO. 12.—THE TWIN SHADOWS.

Through the wonderful congenital resemblance of the heroes, the scenes and incidents of this story assume a weird effect, and the interest is unabated to the last line.

NO. 13.—THE FRENCH DETECTIVE.

Those who are familiar with the work performed by Vidocq, Lecoq, and other eminent French officers, will find this book fully equal to anything written of them.

NO. 14.—BILLY WAYNE, THE ST. LOUIS DETECTIVE.

A tale of the great South-west, replete with all the stirring incidents peculiar to that section of the country.

NO. 15.—THE NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

This is a series of adventures by a New Yorker in his native city, and the lights and shadows of the cosmopolitan metropolis furnish a tale of unparalleled interest.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of
 50c, by the publisher.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

P. O. Box 3751

OLD SLEUTH LIBRARY.

PRICE 5 CENTS EACH.

NO. 16.—O'NEIL M'DARRAGH, THE DETECTIVE.

The hero of this story is endowed with all the astuteness, keenness of perception, and humor of his race, and in his pursuit of criminals his peculiar characteristics are prominently shown.

NO. 17.—OLD SLEUTH IN HARNESS AGAIN.

The veteran in this story shows that none of his old-time vigor has left him, and his scrapes and escapades bring vividly to the reader the extraordinary ability of this wonderful detective.

NO. 18.—THE LADY DETECTIVE.

There is a peculiar interest attaching to a story of a woman placed in an essentially unfeminine position, and the heroine of this novel, in attending to her strange duties, and more than holding her own with desperate law-breakers without any sacrifice of her womanly attributes, makes an absorbing picture.

NO. 19.—THE YANKEE DETECTIVE.

The impassibility and shrewdness of the New England character are shown in the hero of this work, and his successful career in the rôle of a detective is brilliantly described.

NO. 20.—THE FASTEST BOY IN NEW YORK.

A record of some of the scenes in the life of a "man about town." To those not familiar with the seamy side of New York, this book will be a revelation.

NO. 21.—BLACK RAVEN, THE GEORGIA DETECTIVE.

The history of Georgia has given us many exciting narratives, and in the story of "Black Raven" the lawless classes of the wilder portion of the State are made to furnish a tale of surpassing interest.

NO. 22.—NIGHT-HAWK, THE MOUNTED DETECTIVE.

The rare sagacity of a noble brute plays a prominent part in this story, and the detective and his horse form an invincible combination.

NO. 23.—THE GYPSY DETECTIVE.

Some of the qualities peculiar to the Gypsy race seem to be of infinite value to the detective, and the feats performed in the interests of justice by the hero of this story are almost incredible to the uninitiated.

NO. 24.—THE MYSTERIES AND MISERIES OF NEW YORK.

In this delightful story the various shades and peculiarities of life in the great metropolis are delineated with a masterful hand. Exciting incidents and thrilling scenes follow each other with fascinating rapidity, enchainning the interest of the reader from the opening chapter to the last.

NO. 25.—OLD TERRIBLE.

This novel is one of the most enchanting romances ever written. Its central character is all that his name suggests—terrible in his persistency and terrible in the execution of all his shrewd brain conceives in his line of duty. Readers of sensational literature will find in this great novel an inexhaustible store of interest.

NO. 26.—THE SMUGGLERS OF NEW YORK BAY.

Many and startling are the crimes that have been committed on the beautiful waters surrounding the chief commercial port of the New World. In sensational interest they out rival the famed exploits of Captain Kidd and his lawless band of buccaneers. This novel describes those crimes and the manner in which their perpetrators were brought to justice, in such a vividly realistic manner as to thrill all lovers of the sensational in life.

NO. 27.—MANFRED, THE MAGIC TRICK DETECTIVE.

Mystery is the mantle with which habitual criminals always strive to cover their dark deeds. When matched at their game by a clever master of mysterious ways, as described in this novel, a tale of entrancing interest is certain to result, and all readers, while being mystified by Manfred's deft arts, will also be deeply interested in following him in the pursuit of his profession.

NO. 28.—MURA, THE WESTERN LADY DETECTIVE.

The wild and undeveloped sections of the West have afforded a vast field for moving incidents and startling scenes. Among such surroundings the author has placed his heroine, and the daring escapades which environ her career as a detective make a thrilling as well as deeply interesting story, which can not fail to please all who read it.

NO. 29.—MONS. ARMAND; OR, THE FRENCH DETECTIVE IN NEW YORK.

The French are proverbially a shrewd people, as well as being extremely sensational in all their life methods. Mons. Armand inherits all their qualities, and his manner of doing things in his chosen profession is graphically described in this intensely exciting tale of actual life in the American metropolis. If you want a story that will please you, this will meet the want without fail.

NO. 30.—LADY KATE, THE DASHING FEMALE DETECTIVE.

Lady Kate, as her title suggests, has a dash, a vim, and a brilliancy about everything she undertakes, and these attributes are continually placing her amid the most thrilling surroundings, all of which are realistically described in this charming story.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of 5 cents, by the publisher.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

P. O. Box 3751.

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

OLD SLEUTH LIBRARY.

PRICE 5 CENTS EACH.

NO. 31.—HAMUD, THE DETECTIVE.

"Hamud" is one of those weird characters whose personality is invested with deep interest, and all his actions in the various rôles in which he is called upon to act are replete with sensation. Fact and fiction are delightfully woven together in this entrancing story.

NO. 32.—THE GIANT DETECTIVE IN FRANCE.

The "Giant Detective," as his name indicates, is not only physically great, but great in all his professional performances. In the pursuit of his calling in fair France he meets with many thrilling adventures, and is always equal to the occasion. You will find this a strikingly interesting novel. Try it, and be convinced.

NO. 33.—THE AMERICAN DETECTIVE IN RUSSIA.

The land of the Czar has been fruitful, under his autocratic rule, of many deep-laid crimes, which have required great cunning and rare skill to unearth. The American Detective's experience brings him into contact with many hair-raising adventures, in all of which he acquits himself with rare skill and boldness. His career is well worth perusal.

NO. 34.—THE DUTCH DETECTIVE.

Humor, quaint and mirth-provoking, ripples through every line of this bright story, and disputes with many exciting adventures the interest of the reader. If you want a good, hearty laugh, this story will furnish it for you. If you want plenty of sensation, it will supply you with it liberally.

NO. 35.—OLD PURITAN, THE OLD-TIME YANKEE DETECTIVE.

Brother Jonathan always prides himself upon his "cuteness" in solving the ways of the mysterious, and Old Puritan finds ample opportunity in the exciting scenes through which the author leads him to exercise his talents to the top of his bent. This is a dramatic story, full of interest from opening to finish.

NO. 36.—MANFRED'S QUEST; OR, THE MYSTERY OF A TRUNK.

This story involves in its plot a series of the most startling incidents ever conceived in the brain of an imaginative writer, but they are all invested with so much realism that the reader is spell-bound in following them to their conclusion. There is not a dull line in the book, and every situation described bristles with interest.

NO. 37.—TOM THUMB; OR, THE WONDERFUL BOY DETECTIVE.

This is a story that will prove of great interest to young people who admire a smart, bright boy who has the intelligence to cope single-handed with the evil-doers of the community, and who has the courage to accomplish all he undertakes, no matter how difficult.

NO. 38.—OLD IRONSIDES ABROAD

Lovers of stories which have the scene of their action in strange countries, among strange scenes, will find an intellectual treat in this sensational novel. It deals with many queer characters, all of whom are invested with great interest.

NO. 39.—LITTLE BLACK TOM; OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A MISCHIEVOUS DARKY.

This is one of the most comical stories ever presented to the public. The humorous performances of Little Black Tom are sure to be an effective panacea for the worst case of blues, dispelling them at once by their merry conceits and laughable situations. An excellent little story for the family circle.

NO. 40.—OLD IRONSIDES AMONG THE COWBOYS.

The life of a cowboy in the Wild West is always full of adventure, and Old Ironsides, in his experience among them, meets with many thrilling incidents on his journeys across the trackless prairies. Boys, this is just the kind of a book you are looking for.

NO. 41.—BLACK TOM IN SEARCH OF A FATHER; OR, THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF A MISCHIEVOUS DARKY.

Black Tom frolics through the pages of this book, scattering fun and button-bursting laughter on every side. He is as prankish as a young colt, and is sure to be a favorite with all who make his acquaintance through reading this book.

NO. 42.—BONANZA BARDIE; OR, THE TREASURE OF THE ROCKIES.

The great gold mines hidden in the Far West are not more rich in treasure than this delightful story is in interest. It is full of instruction and adventure, and is sure to entertain every reader, no matter how critical his literary tastes may be.

NO. 43.—OLD TRANSFORM, THE SECRET SPECIAL DETECTIVE.

The wonderful career of this great detective, and the wonderful manner in which he succeeded in deluding those whose deeds had placed him on their track, forms one of the most delightful romances in the realm of modern fiction.

NO. 44.—THE KING OF THE SHADOWS.

Shadowing criminals and people of suspicious character is an occupation involving a keen sense of perception and great courage, and is always attended with great danger to the "Shadower." The King of them all is described with a free hand in this novel, and his many adventures, linked together, form an absorbing narrative.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of 5 cents, by the publisher.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

P. O. Box 3751.

OLD SLEUTH LIBRARY.**PRICE 5 CENTS EACH.****NO. 45.—GASPARONI, THE ITALIAN DETECTIVE;
OR, HIDE-AND-SEEK IN NEW YORK.**

It is well known to the police of all the great cities that there are many treacherous and desperate criminals among the Italians who have come to America. Gasparoni, in his duties, is constantly beset by danger, and the successful manner in which he circumvents his enemies at every point makes a story well worth reading.

NO. 46.—OLD SLEUTH'S LUCK.

The shrewd old detective, in his remorseless pursuit of evil-doers, meets many dangers that threaten his destruction, and his luck in eluding them and vanquishing his foes form one of the most remarkable of the many thrilling works that have described his exciting career.

NO. 47.—THE IRISH DETECTIVE.

A realistic, thrilling narrative of actual life, delineating with startling fidelity striking scenes and stirring incidents in the adventurous life of a shrewd and witty son of the Emerald Isle.

NO. 48.—DOWN IN A COAL MINE.

This magnificent story is founded on facts connected with one of the most exciting periods in the mining strikes and difficulties in Pennsylvania during the reign of terror inaugurated by the famous Molly Maguire organization. A thrilling love story, involving the fortunes of a scion of a noble English family and the lovely daughter of a mine owner, forms a pleasing background to the sensational scenes portrayed.

NO. 49.—FAITHFUL MIKE, THE IRISH HERO.

Stirring situations, dramatic incidents, and heroic deeds are distinguishing features of all of Old Sleuth's novels, and in this splendid narrative he has exercised his wonderful talents in his usual forceful manner, creating a story that is sure to delight every reader.

NO. 50.—SILVER TOM, THE DETECTIVE; OR, LINK BY LINK.

In this work the writer teaches his readers a valuable lesson—that step by step, link by link, great things are achieved, great mysteries unraveled.

**NO. 51.—THE DUKE OF NEW YORK; OR, THE WONDERFUL CAREER
OF AN ORPHAN BOY.**

Much as Old Sleuth has given to the public in the form of interesting stories, in none of his works has he had such a broad field for his powerful pen. His solving the mystery of a poor bootblack's parentage and bringing to him the title and ancestral estates of his ancestors, is told by this clever writer in his finest style.

NO. 52.—JACK GAMEWAY; OR, A WESTERN BOY IN NEW YORK.

This brave Western boy acts as a model to every youth in the great city which was the scene of his many and thrilling experiences. Reading this book will do much to develop the energy and pluck inherent in the average American boy.

NO. 53.—ALL ROUND NEW YORK.

In giving this book to the public, its brilliant author has proved his ability as a writer of that class of pure fiction so much needed at the present day. The purity of its tone, and the dash and vim with which he clothes its hero, should endear it to every boy.

NO. 54.—OLD IRONSIDES IN NEW YORK.

If the reading of "Old Ironsides Abroad" was a pleasure, this will combine instruction with pleasure, at the same time giving the reader a comprehensive view of the shady side of the great metropolis. This work is a masterpiece.

NO. 55.—JACK RIPPLE AND HIS TALKING DOG.

This book is undoubtedly one of the funniest ever given to the public. From beginning to end it abounds in brilliant repartee and laughable situations. The talking dog is a host in himself. Not a dry line in it.

NO. 56.—BILLY JOYCE, THE GOVERNMENT DETECTIVE.

This subject has given its brilliant author ample opportunity for the portrayal of one of those clever men whom the Government employs in ferreting out counterfeiters, and this "Old Sleuth" has done in his inimitable style, bringing into play his wonderful power of presenting thrilling situations and pleasing climaxes.

TO BE ISSUED JUNE 25TH, 1892:

NO. 57.—BADGER AND HIS SHADOW.

This masterpiece of detective skill and stratagem is replete with all the various devices and maneuvers which Badger employs while in pursuit of criminals. This story abounds in stirring scenes and situations of great danger, and is written in a manner that can not but prove interesting to the lovers of romantic episodes.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of 5 cents, by the publisher.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

P. O. Box 3751.

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

The Library of American Authors.

EMBRACING COPYRIGHT NOVELS BY THE MOST POPULAR WRITERS OF AMERICAN FICTION.

ISSUED MONTHLY.

1 My Own Sin.

BY MRS. MARY E. BRYAN.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

A TALE of passion, of remorse, of moving incidents, and fascinating human interest—one of the most delightful stories ever given to the public by Mrs. Mary E. Bryan, and written in her very best style.

2 The Rock or the Rye. (Comic.)

BY T. C. DE LEON.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

THIS is one of the brightest and wittiest brochures ever issued to the public. It burlesques, with keen wit and blighting satire, the erotic style of literature of which Amélie Rives, the authoress of "The Quick or the Dead," is the acknowledged high-priestess. Its wit, though pointed, is always refined; its satire, though biting, never malicious. The book is profusely illustrated by the witty pencils of well-known comic artists. If you want a rare literary treat, send for this book.

3 Shadow and Sunshine.

BY ADNA H. LIGHTNER.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

PRONOUNCED by capable critics to be a story of great power in its descriptive coloring, its portrayal of life, its realism, dramatic force, and keen insight into human nature. A pleasant companion to beguile monotony, affording plenty of cheer, entertainment, and mental relaxation.

4 Daisy Brooks.

BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY, author of "Miss Middleton's Lover."

PRICE 25 CENTS.

A PLEASING story, containing all the best features of a well-constructed romance. The characters move through the pages with a blitheness, dash and spirit which make them sentient with captivating interest.

5 The Heiress of Cameron Hall.

BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

"THE HEIRESS OF CAMERON HALL" is a young lady whose personality possesses many elements of human interest, and the authoress has used them with rare skill in the construction of an exceedingly clever tale. Sure to beguile time pleasantly for all who may read this pretty story.

8 Marriage.

BY MARGARET LEE, author of "Faithful and Unfaithful," etc.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

THIS great novel has won the highest commendation of the press and public wherever it has become known. William Ewart Gladstone, ex-Prime Minister of England, has pronounced it to be a work of entrancing interest, and all who read it will readily indorse his high opinion. No one can afford to miss a perusal of this splendid book.

7 Lizzie Adriance.

BY MARGARET LEE, author of "Marriage," etc.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

A HIGH-TONED work of fiction, brimful of human interest in every chapter. The characters are all drawn with the full, free hand of a perfect student of human nature, and the incidents and situations are all tinged with the best impulses and the noblest aspirations of the human heart. This is a novel worthy of a place in every refined household.

8 Madolin Rivers.

BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

THE episodes in the life of a charming but very practical young lady who moves imperiously through life, swaying hearts by her many accomplishments, and meeting with many exciting adventures, are picturesquely described in this novel with a rare blending of realism and fidelity to nature.

9 Saints and Sinners.

BY MARIE WALSH, author of "Hazel Kirke."

PRICE 25 CENTS.

THE story upon which this novel is based appeared in dramatic form on the stage of the Madison Square Theater in New York, and was one of the greatest successes that was ever performed in that refined temple of the drama. Miss Walsh has carefully preserved all the incidents, situations, and climaxes which delighted thousands who witnessed its performance on the stage.

10 Leonie Locke; or, The Romance of a Beautiful New York Working-Girl.

BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

THE daily life of a New York working-girl gifted with beauty and talents which fit her for a high sphere, with the trials, temptations, heart-burnings and delights which enter into her existence are beautifully portrayed in this delightful love story. It is a novel sure to fascinate all who read its pages.

11 Junie's Love-Test.

BY LAURA JEAN LIBBEY.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

ALL lovers of romantic literature who have read this pretty love story pronounce it to be one of the best that Miss Libbey has written. It is bright in every line, interesting in every incident, and entertaining from the beginning to the finish. There is nothing dull or commonplace in the story, and all will find it well worthy of perusal. Read it, and you will be pleased.

12 Ida Chaloner's Heart; or, The Husband's Trial.

BY LUCY RANDALL COMFORT.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

MRS. COMFORT in this entrancing story portrays with rare skill the workings of the human heart in its various emotions. Her scenes are all sketched from actual life, and the incidents are so thoroughly invested with realism that the reader becomes spell-bound under their magical influence.

The foregoing works are for sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address, postage prepaid, on receipt of the price, by the publisher.

ADDRESS GEORGE MUNRO, MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

17 TO 27 VANDEWATER STREET, NEW YORK.

P. O. Box 3761.

Die Deutsche Library.

Diese populäre Romane sind die besten in der deutschen Sprache. „Daß diese große Masse von Romanen eine unverfälschte Erziehung und eine starke Unterrichtsgewalt der Deutschen der Vereinigten Staaten ist, und eine große Hilfe für Amerikaner, welche die deutsche Sprache studiren, kann niemand leugnen.“

Nachfolgende Werke sind in der Deutschen Library erschienen:

1 Der Kaiser, von Prof. G. Ebers..... 20	90 Das Fräulein von St. Amaranthe, von R. von Gottschall..... 10	168 Die Saxoborussen, von Gr. Samarow. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
2 Die Somosierra, von R. Waldmüller..... 10	91 Der Fürst von Montenegro, von A. v. Winterfeldt..... 10	169 Serapis, Roman von G. Ebers..... 20
3 Das Geheimniß der alten Mamsell, Roman von E. Marlitt..... 10	92 Um ein Herz, von E. Falk..... 10	170 Ein Gottesurtheil, Roman von E. Werner..... 20
4 Quisiana, von Fr. Spielhagen..... 10	93 Uarda, von Georg Ebers..... 20	171 Die Kreuzfahrer, Roman von Felix Dahn..... 20
5 Gartenlauben-Blüthen, von E. Werner..... 20	94 In der zwölften Stunde, von Fried. Spielhagen, und Ebbe und Fluth, von M. Widdern..... 10	172 Der Erbe von Weidenhof, von K. Franzos..... 10
6 Die Hand der Nemesis, von E. A. König..... 20	95 Die von Hohenstein, von Fr. Spielhagen. Erste Hälfte..... 20	173 Die Reise nach dem Schicksal, von K. Franzos..... 10
7 Amtmann's Magd, von E. Marlitt..... 20	95 Die von Hohenstein, von Fr. Spielhagen. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	174 Villa Schönow, Roman von W. Raabe..... 10
8 Vineta, von E. Werner..... 20	96 Deutsch und Slavisch, von Lucian Herbert..... 10	175 Das Vermächtniß, von Ernst Eckstein. Erste Hälfte..... 20
9 Auf der Rummingsburg, von M. Widdern..... 10	97 Im Hause des Commerzien-Raths, von Marlitt..... 20	175 Das Vermächtniß, von Ernst Eckstein. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
10 Das Haus Hillel, von Max Ring..... 20	98 Helene, von H. Wachenhusen, und Die Prinzessin von Portugal, von A. Meissner..... 10	176 Herr und Frau Beyer, von P. Lindau..... 10
11 Glückauf!, von E. Werner..... 10	99 Aspasia, von Robert Hammerling..... 20	177 Die Nihilisten, von Joh. Scherr..... 10
12 Goldelse, von E. Marlitt..... 10	100 Ekkehard, von Victor v. Scheffel..... 20	178 Die Frau mit den Karfunkelsteinen, von E. Marlitt..... 20
13 Vater und Sohn, von F. Lewald..... 10	101 Ein Kampf um Rom, von F. Dahn. Erste Hälfte..... 20	179 Jetta, von George Taylor..... 20
14 Die Würger von Paris, von C. Vacano..... 20	101 Ein Kampf um Rom, von F. Dahn. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	180 Die Stieftochter, von J. Smith..... 20
15 Der Diamantschleifer, von Rosenthal-Bonin..... 10	102 Spinoza, von Berth. Auerbach..... 20	181 An der Heilquelle, von Fried. Spielhagen..... 20
16 Ingo und Ingraban, von Gustav Freytag..... 10	103 Von der Erde zum Mond, von J. Verne..... 10	182 Was der Totenkopf erzählt, von M. Jokai..... 10
17 Eine Frage, von Georg Ebers..... 20	104 Der Todesgruß der Legionen, von G. Samarow..... 20	183 Der Zigeunerbaron, von Paul Heyse..... 20
18 Im Paradiese, von Paul Heyse..... 20	105 Reise um den Mond, von Julius Verne..... 10	184 Himmische u. irdische Liebe, von Paul Heyse..... 20
19 In beiden Hemisphären, von Suro-Schücking..... 20	106 Fürst und Musiker, von Max Ring..... 20	185 Ehre, Roman von E. Eckstein..... 20
20 Gelebt und gelitten, von H. Wachenhusen..... 20	107 Nena Sahib, von J. Retcliffe. Erster Band..... 20	186 Violanta, Roman von H. Wachenhusen..... 10
21 Die Eichhofs, von M. von Reichenbach..... 10	107 Nena Sahib, von J. Retcliffe. Zweiter Band..... 20	187 Nemi, Erzählung von H. Dewall. Erste Hälfte..... 20
22 Kinder der Welt, von P. Heyse. Erste Hälfte..... 20	107 Nena Sahib, von J. Retcliffe. Dritter Band..... 20	188 Strandgut, von Joh. von Dewall. Erste Hälfte..... 20
23 Kinder der Welt, von P. Heyse. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	108 Reise nach dem Mittelpunkt der Erde, von J. Verne..... 10	188 Homo sum, von Georg Ebers..... 20
24 Barfüßle, von B. Auerbach..... 10	109 Die silberne Hochzeit, von S. Kohn..... 10	190 Eine Aegyptische Königstochter, von G. Ebers. Erste Hälfte..... 20
25 Das Nest der Zaunkönige, von G. Freytag..... 10	110 Das Spukhaus, von A. von Winterfeldt..... 20	190 Eine Aegyptische Königstochter, von G. Ebers. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
26 Frühlingsboten, von E. Werner..... 20	111 Die Erben des Wahnsinns, von T. Marx..... 10	191 Sanct Michael, von E. Werner. Erste Hälfte..... 20
27 Zelle No. 7, von Pierre Zacone..... 20	112 Der Ulan, von Joh. von Dewall..... 20	191 Sanct Michael, von E. Werner. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
28 Die junge Frau, von H. Wachenhusen..... 20	113 Um hohen Preis, von E. Werner..... 20	192 Die Nilbraut, von Georg Ebers. Erste Hälfte..... 20
29 Buchenheim, von Th. von Arnim..... 10	114 Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten, von B. Auerbach. Erste Hälfte..... 20	192 Die Nilbraut, von Georg Ebers. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
30 Auf der Bahn des Verbrechens, von E. A. König..... 20	114 Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten, von B. Auerbach. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	193 Die Andere, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
31 Brigitta, von Berth. Auerbach..... 10	115 Reise um die Erde, von Julius Verne..... 10	194 Ein armes Mädchen, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
32 Im Schillinghof, von E. Marlitt..... 20	116 Cäsars Ende, von S. J. R. (Schluss von 104)..... 20	195 Der Roman der Stiefmutter, von Paul Heyse..... 20
33 Gesprengte Fesseln, von E. Werner..... 20	117 Auf Capri, von Carl Detlef..... 10	196 Kloster Wendhausen, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
34 Der Heiduck, von Hans Wachenhusen..... 20	118 Severa, von E. Hartner..... 20	197 Das Vermächtniß Kains, von Sacher-Masoch. Erste Hälfte..... 20
35 Die Sturmhexe, von Gräfin M. Keyserling..... 10	119 Ein Arzt der Seele, von Wilh. von Hillern..... 20	197 Das Vermächtniß Kains, von Sacher-Masoch. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
36 Das Kind Bajazzo's, von E. A. König..... 20	120 Die Livergans, von Hermann Willfried..... 10	198 Frau Venus, von Karl Frenzel..... 20
37 Die Brüder vom deutschen Hause, von Gustav Freytag..... 20	121 Zwanzigtausend Meilen unterm Meer, von Jul. Verne..... 20	199 Eine Viertelstunde Vater, von F. W. Hackländer..... 10
38 Der Wildlieb, von F. Gerstäcker..... 10	122 Mutter und Sohn, von A. Godin..... 10	200 Heimatklage, von E. Werner..... 20
39 Der Doppelgänger, von L. Schücking..... 20	123 Das Haus des Fabrikanten, von G. Samarow..... 20	201 Herzenskristen, Roman von W. Heimbürg..... 20
40 Die weisse Frau von Greifenstein, von E. Fels..... 20	124 Bruderliche Liebe, von L. Schücking..... 10	202 Die Schwestern, Roman von G. Ebers..... 20
41 Hans und Grete, von Fr. Spielhagen..... 10	125 Die Römerfahrt der Epigonen, von G. Samarow. Erste Hälfte..... 20	203 Der Egoist, von E. Werner..... 10
42 Mein Onkel Don Juan, von H. Hopfen..... 20	125 Die Römerfahrt der Epigonen, von G. Samarow. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	204 Salvatore, von Ernst Eckstein..... 20
43 Markus König, von Gustav Freytag..... 20	126 Porkeles und Porkelessa, von J. Scherr..... 10	205 Lumpenmüllers Lieschen, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
44 Die schönen Amerikanerinnen, von Fr. Spielhagen..... 10	127 Ein Friedensstörer, von Victor Blüthgen, und Der heimliche Gast, von R. Byr..... 20	206 Das einsame Haus, von Adolf Streckfuss..... 20
45 Das grosse Loos, von A. König..... 20	128 Schöne Frauen, von R. Edmund Hahn..... 10	207 Die verlorene Handschrift, von Gustav Freytag. Erste Hälfte..... 20
46 Zur Ehre Gottes, von Sacher, und Ultimo, von F. Spielhagen..... 10	129 Bakchen und Thyrsoträger, von A. Niemann..... 20	207 Die verlorene Handschrift, von Gustav Freytag. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
47 Die Geschwister, von Gustav Freytag..... 20	130 Getrennt, Roman von E. Polko..... 10	208 Das Eulenhäus, von E. Marlitt..... 20
48 Bischof und König, von Mariam Tanger, und Der Piratenkönig, von M. Jokai..... 10	131 Alte Ketten, Roman von L. Schücking..... 20	209 Des Herzens Goltgath, Roman von H. Wachenhusen..... 20
49 Reichsgräfin Gisela, von Marlitt..... 20	132 Ueber die Wolken, von Wilhelm Jensen..... 10	210 Aus dem Leben meiner alten Freundin, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
50 Bewusste Zeiten, von Leon Alexandrowitsch..... 10	133 Das Gold des Orion, von H. Rosenthal-Bonin..... 10	211 Die Gred, Roman von G. Ebers. Erste Hälfte..... 20
51 Um Ehre und Leben, von E. A. König..... 20	134 Um den Halbmond, von Gr. Samarow. Erste Hälfte..... 20	211 Die Gred, Roman von G. Ebers. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
52 Aus einer kleinen Stadt, von Gustav Freytag..... 20	134 Um den Halbmond, von Gr. Samarow. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	212 Truchsess Heirath, von Wilh. Heimbürg..... 20
53 Hildegard, von Ernst von Waldow..... 10	135 Troubadour-Novellen, von P. Heyse..... 10	213 Asbein, von Ossip Schubin..... 20
54 Dame Orange, von Hans Wachenhusen..... 20	136 Der Schweden-Schatz, von H. Wachenhusen..... 20	214 Die Alptraue, von E. Werner..... 20
55 Johannisnacht, von M. Schmidt..... 20	137 Die Bettlerin vom Pont des Arts und Das Bild des Kaisers, von Wilh. Hauff..... 10	215 Nero, von E. Eckstein. Erste Hälfte..... 20
56 Angela, von Fr. Spielhagen..... 20	138 Modelle, Hist. Roman, von A. von Winterfeldt..... 20	215 Nero, von E. Eckstein. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
57 Falsche Wege, von J. von Brun-Barnow..... 20	139 Der Krieg um die Haube, von Stefanie Keyser..... 10	216 Zwei Seelen, von Rud. Lindau..... 20
58 Versunkene Welten, von W. Jensen..... 20	140 Numa Roustman, von Alphonse Daudet..... 20	217 Manöver u. Kriegsbilder, von Joh. von Dewall..... 10
59 Die Wohnungssucher, von A. von Winterfeldt..... 10	141 Spätsommer, Novelle von C. von Sydow, und Engeld, Novelle von Balduin Möllhausen..... 10	218 Lore von Tollen, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
60 Eine Million, von E. A. König..... 20	142 Bartolomäus, von Brusehaver, und Musma Cusalin, Novellen von L. Ziemssen..... 10	219 Spitzeln, Roman von P. Lindau..... 20
61 Das Skelet, von F. Spielhagen, und Das Fräuleinhaus, von Gustav zu Putlitz..... 10	143 Ein gemeuchelter Dichter, Komischer Roman von A. von Winterfeldt. Erste Hälfte..... 20	220 Der Referendar, Novelle von Ernst Eckstein..... 10
62 Soll und Haben, von G. Freytag. Erste Hälfte..... 20	143 Ein gemeuchelter Dichter, Komischer Roman von A. von Winterfeldt. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	221 Das Geiger-Evchen, Roman von A. Dom..... 20
63 Soll und Haben, von G. Freytag. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	144 Ein Wort, Neuer Roman von G. Ebers..... 20	222 Die Götterburg, von M. Jokai..... 20
64 Schloss Grünwald, von Charlotte Fieit..... 20	145 Novellen, von Paul Heyse..... 10	223 Der Kronprinz und die deutsche Kaiserkrone, von G. Freytag..... 10
65 Zwei Kreuzherren, von Lucian Herbert..... 20	146 Adam Homo in Versen, von Paludan-Müller..... 20	224 Nicht im Geleise, Roman von Ida Boy-Ed..... 20
66 Die Erlebnisse einer Schutzlosen, von K. Suro-Schücking..... 10	147 Ihr einziger Bruder, von W. Heimbürg..... 10	225 Camilla, Roman von E. Eckstein..... 20
67 Das Haldeprinzesschen, von E. Marlitt..... 20	148 Ophelia, Roman von H. von Lankau..... 20	226 Josua, Erzählung aus biblischer Zeit von Georg Ebers..... 20
68 Die Geyer-Wally, von Wilh. von Hillern..... 20	149 Nemesis, von Helene von Hülsen..... 10	227 Am Belt, Roman von Gregor Samarow..... 20
69 Idealisten, von A. Reinow..... 20	150 Felicitas, Roman von Ernst Eckstein..... 10	228 Henrik Ibsen's Werke in vier Bände, jeder Band..... 20
70 Am Altar, von E. Werner..... 20	151 Die Claudier, Roman von Leopold Komert..... 10	229 In geistiger Irre, Roman von H. Köhler..... 20
71 Der König der Luft, von A. von Winterfeldt..... 20	152 Eine Verlorene, von Leopold Komert..... 10	230 Flammenzeichen, Roman von E. Werner..... 20
72 Moschko von Parma, von Karl E. Franzos..... 10	153 Luginsland, Roman von Otto Roquette..... 10	231 Der Seelsorger, von V. Valentin..... 10
73 Schuld und Sühne, von Ewald A. König..... 20	154 Im Banne der Muse, von W. Heimbürg..... 20	232 Der Präsident, von K. E. Franzos..... 20
74 In Reih' und Glied, von Fr. Spielhagen. Erste Hälfte..... 20	155 Die Schwester, von L. Schücking..... 10	233 Erlachhof, Roman von O. Schubin..... 20
74 In Reih' und Glied, von Fr. Spielhagen. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	156 Die Colonie, von Friedrich Gerstäcker..... 20	234 Ein Mann, von H. Heiberg..... 20
75 Das Landhaus am Rhein, von B. Auerbach. Erste Hälfte..... 20	157 Deutsche Liebe, Roman von M. Müller..... 20	235 Nach zehn Jahren, Roman von M. Jokai..... 20
75 Das Landhaus am Rhein, von Berth. Auerbach. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	158 Die Rose von Delhi, von Fels. Erste Hälfte..... 20	236 Um die Ehre, Roman von Moritz von Reichenbach..... 20
76 Clara Vere, von Friedrich Spielhagen..... 20	158 Die Rose von Delhi, von Fels. Zweite Hälfte..... 20	237 Eine Hof-Intrigue, von C. H. v. Dedenroth..... 10
77 Die Frau Bürgermeisterin, von G. Ebers..... 20	159 Debora, Roman von W. Müller..... 10	238 Gräfin Ruth, von Emile Erhard..... 20
78 Aus eigener Kraft, von Wilh. v. Hillern..... 20	160 Eine Mutter, von Friedrich Gerstäcker..... 10	239 Eine unbedeutende Frau, von W. Heimbürg..... 20
79 Ein Kampf um's Recht, von K. Franzos..... 20	161 Friedhofsbäume, von W. von Hillern..... 10	240 Boris Lesky, Roman von Ossip Schubin..... 20
80 Prinzessin Schnee, von Marie Widdern..... 10	162 Nach der ersten Liebe, von K. Frenzel..... 20	241 Die Erbtante, Roman von Johannes von Dewall..... 20
81 Die zweite Frau, von E. Marlitt..... 20	163 Gebannt und erlöst, von E. Werner..... 20	242 Gloria victis!, Roman von Ossip Schubin..... 20
82 Benvenuto, von Fanny Lewald..... 20	164 Uhlenshan, Roman von Fried. Spielhagen..... 20	243 Brau rechts!, Roman von Ossip Schubin..... 20
83 Pessimisten, von F. von Stengel..... 20	165 Klytia, Roman von G. Taylor..... 20	244 Merlin, Roman von Paul Heyse. Erste Hälfte..... 20
84 Die Hofdame der Erzherzogin, von F. von Witzleben-Wendelstein..... 10	166 Mayo, Erzählung von P. Lindau..... 10	244 Merlin, Roman von Paul Heyse. Zweite Hälfte..... 20
85 Ein Vierteljahrhundert, von B. Young..... 20	167 Die Herrin von Ibbichstein, von F. Henkel..... 20	245 Ein Spiel des Zufalls, Roman von E. A. König..... 20
86 Thüringer Erzählungen, von E. Marlitt..... 20	168 Die Saxoborussen, von Gr. Samarow. Erste Hälfte..... 20	246 Die Komödianten des Lebens, von Maurus Jokai..... 20
87 Der Erbe von Mortella, von A. Dom..... 20		
88 Vom armen ägyptischen Mann, von Hans Wachenhusen..... 20		
89 Der goldene Schatz aus dem dreissigjährigen Krieg, von E. A. König..... 20		

„Die Deutsche Library“ ist bei allen Zeitungshändlern zu haben, oder wird gegen 12 Cents für einfache Nummern, oder 25 Cents für Doppelnummern, nach irgend einer Adresse portofrei versendet. Bei Bestellung durch die Post bittet man nach Nummern zu bestellen.

George Munro's Söhne, Herausgeber.

P. O. Box 3751.

17 to 27 Vandewater Street, New York.